

# The Intermediate State

And Prayers for the Dead

Examined in the Light of Scripture, and of Ancient  
Jewish and Christian Literature

By the

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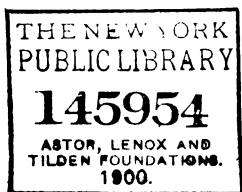
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## INTRODUCTION

THE age in which we live may be in some respects characterised as an age in which great efforts are made to revive old practices and old doctrines. Things long forgotten are being brought to light, and practices long considered obsolete have once more become common. Ancient practices are not, however, in all cases to be commended, and among such undesirable revivals of what was common in the dark ages is that of prayers for the dead.

Age of  
Revivals.

It has long been regarded as a fact of uncontroverted history that the Jews, at the time of our Lord, were in the habit of praying for the dead. And as many curious doctrines and practices were introduced among that people in the centuries that intervened between the Return from the Captivity in Babylon and the Christian era, it was not unnatural to suppose that the practice, which was probably common in the fourth century after Christ, existed also in the first century.

Supposed  
fact as to  
Jewish  
practice.

Stevens 3/1/00 7/6

The history narrated in 2 Macc. xii., and the comments made on that story by the compiler of the book, tended to confirm the impression among those unacquainted with other Jewish literature.

M. Israel  
Levi.

M. Israel Levi, who ranks among the foremost Jewish scholars of the present day, and who is especially conversant with questions connected with ancient Jewish liturgies, has expressed his surprise that the statements of the Second Book of Maccabees, viewed as of little importance by the Synagogue, should have been so highly esteemed by the Christian Church. He calls attention to the fact (see p. 40 of this volume) that the doctors of the law belonging to the party of the Pharisees, in their contests with the Sadducees concerning the resurrection, never once referred to the narrative of Second Maccabees, although that history, if admitted to be true, and understood in the sense of prayer for the dead, would have silenced their adversaries.

Second  
Maccabees.

The Second Book of Maccabees is the solitary proof which has been adduced in support of the Jewish practice in Pre-Christian times. The testimony of that book on the point in dispute, is, however, very far from being clear and distinct (see p. 37 *f.*).

It is strange that no attempt has hitherto been made in our country to examine on this subject the remains of Jewish literature belonging to the centuries before and the centuries immediately succeeding the Christian era. For in that literature there is much to show what was the state of opinion among the Jews of that period on the subject of the Intermediate state and the condition of the soul after death.

To investigate that subject is one of the objects of the volume now published.

It is admitted on all sides that the Old Testament Scriptures belonging to the Jewish canon do not record any instance of prayers for the dead. But that fact is not conclusive as to Jewish practice in the time of our Lord. Hence it has been necessary to examine the Jewish uninspired works (inclusive of those commonly known under the name of the Apocrypha) written during the period already mentioned. Nearly twenty-five of those works—for many sections of the Book of Enoch and of other books of like character are really independent writings—have been examined in the present volume. Several of the Apocryphal works contain no statements bearing on the subject, as, for instance, First Maccabees and First Esdras.

Jewish  
literature.

Apocry-  
phal writ-  
ings.

In the light of such a review of Jewish literature, the passage in Second Maccabees will be at once seen to be of slight importance, although it will be found fully discussed in these pages.

Opinions  
of oppo-  
nents.

It is scarcely necessary to call special attention to the chapters which discuss the New Testament passages adduced in support of the practice, or to those chapters which speak of other points in connection with the present controversy within and without the Church of England. We have endeavoured fairly to state the opinions of the theologians belonging to other schools of thought. We have striven to cite the authorities for every statement which has been put forth in our pages. Of course we do not refer to casual remarks on matters outside the particular subject in hand.

Professor  
Charles's  
"Escha-  
tology."

After this work had been sent to the printers, we learned that Rev. R. H. Charles, Professor of Biblical Greek in the University of Dublin, had also in the press an important work on Eschatology. We at once wrote to that gentleman, with whom we have been for years on most friendly terms, and obtained from him proof-sheets of his work, which have enabled us to enrich the present volume with information

on several points that otherwise would have been passed over.<sup>1</sup> Our indebtedness to that work, and to other works of Professor Charles, will be seen by reference to the Index of this volume.

On many points the controversy on questions touching a future life is intimately connected with theories of Biblical criticism. Hence it may be useful here to make some general remarks.

Biblical  
criticism.

In discussing points of Biblical criticism, whether in reference to "the lower criticism," namely, that which treats of the sacred text itself, or to "the higher criticism," which has to deal with questions concerning the authorship of the various books, we cannot, and will not, ignore our Christian standpoint.

As Christians, we believe firmly in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and maintain with St. Paul that "He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of

Christian  
belief.

<sup>1</sup> Professor Charles's work is on the cover of the book entitled "Eschatology, Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian," but the full title-page is "A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life, in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity, or Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian Eschatology from Pre-Prophetic times till the close of the New Testament Canon: Being the Jowett Lectures for 1898-99. By R. H. Charles, D.D., Professor of Biblical Greek, Trinity College, Dublin." London: Adam & Charles Black, 1899.

holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. i. 3). Hence we do not consider ourselves free to put forward any hypothesis which ignores the facts that Christ was "a prophet mighty in word and deed among the people," and that "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii. 8).

Old Test.  
Scriptures.

The texts of the Old Testament Scriptures in our hands to-day are substantially the same as those which were in the hands of Christ and His Apostles. The text of the Old Testament Scriptures is well known to be in some respects faulty. The Old Testament Scriptures suffered considerably at the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. And at the return of the Jewish nation from its long captivity in Babylon efforts seem to have been made to revise the text of the sacred writings, and to re-edit them for the use of the nation. Christ, however, appealed to those writings in the form they existed in His days, as books which contained a revelation from God to man, and as works which bore distinct witness to His mission. Not only was this His uniform practice during His earthly ministry, but even on the very day on which He rose from the dead He appealed to those Scriptures on two different



occasions. "Beginning from Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke xxiv. 27). He pointed out to Cleopas and his companion that "the Christ had to suffer these things, and to enter into His glory" (Luke xxiv. 26). And somewhat later on the same day, addressing the assembled disciples, He said, that "all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms concerning Me" (Luke xxiv. 44).

Hence we must ever protest against those Biblical critics who, on the ground of critical conjecture, without any authority derived from MSS. or Ancient Versions, have ventured to alter even those texts of the Old Testament Scriptures, to which Christ appealed in proof of His mission, and to "correct" those texts in such a manner as to remove from them the Messianic references which our Lord maintained were set forth therein.

Wanton  
alterations  
of texts.

Those who in the present day come forward in the defence of the Protestant principles enunciated at the Reformation on the one hand, or who seek to uphold the authority of Divine revelation on the other, have to bear no little reproach for being

“behind the age.” It has become now common for those who seek to revive the sacerdotalism of the Middle Ages, or who endeavour to depreciate the authority of the Holy Scriptures, to ignore, when possible, works written from a standpoint different from their own. It was a characteristic weakness on the part of the late Professor Heinrich Ewald to ignore those critics who did not belong to his school. The Nemesis of time has dealt severely with the works of that great scholar, which, though replete with learning and criticism of a high character, have in turn now fallen to a large extent into oblivion. The Biblical scholarship of the present day, which claims to be progressive and “up-to-date,” is to a large extent self-destructive. As Saturn was fabled to have devoured his children, so many modern critics destroy their own works, and seem madly intent on sawing through the branches of the tree of knowledge on which they are themselves sitting.

Up-to-date criticism.

Jewish and Agnostic critics.

Jewish and Agnostic critics are, no doubt, perfectly justified from their standpoint in ignoring the authority of the New Testament Scriptures. The Christian interpreter ought to seek to uphold the Christian interpretation in the face of all assailants. For it is simply suicidal for those

who profess to be Christian critics to throw overboard the authority of Christ, and to seek to rival the antagonists of their faith in the readiness with which they propound hypotheses which deliberately set at nought the expositions of Christ and His Apostles.

In discussing the questions connected with the Intermediate state and Prayers for the dead, it should be noticed in advance that we cannot assume the position with regard to the teaching of the Old and New Testament Scriptures taken up by some Christian theologians. In matters which lie beyond man's ken we regard the statements of the Scriptures to be authoritative; and in all cases where the Scriptures are silent, we must be satisfied to confess our ignorance.

Points  
beyond  
man's ken.

We take occasion here also to warn the general reader not to accept without examination all the statements concerning the Reformers put forth by divines of a certain school of thought. It is unfair for a theologian, whose position and scholarship ought to be a guarantee for trustworthiness, to quote *early* writings of any writer, as setting forth his mature views when the *later* writings of the same author prove distinctly that

Bishop  
Latimer  
on prayers  
for the  
dead.

his opinions underwent, at a later period, a radical change. Thus it is unfair to quote Latimer's remark in the sermon before Convocation in 1536, who, in alluding to persons whom he characterised as "finders of things not lost," remarked, "This, to pray for dead folks, this is not found, for it was never lost." In 1550 that Reformer, however, expressed himself very differently (see "Sermons of Bishop Latimer," Parker Society's Edition, pp. 246, 305). He insisted in his later sermons on the hopelessness of repentance after death ("Remains of Bishop Latimer," pp. 56, 58), and in a sermon preached in 1552, expressly stated, "For when a man dieth without faith in Christ, all the masses in the world are not able to relieve him." "The judgments of God are immutable; that is, as you die, so shall you rise" ("Remains," p. 192). Bishop Latimer's arguments against purgatory and prayers for the dead, with King Henry VIII.'s notes in favour of both, may be perused in his "Remains," pp. 245-9.

Opinions  
of Reformers.

We mention this fact simply as a specimen. We have no time to enter at present into a thorough investigation of the English and German writers who have been improperly adduced

in favour of prayers for the dead. The practice of such prayers was not forbidden in the Apology for the Augsburg Confession. For Luther was pre-eminently a practical man, and he knew well that the matter in question was of inferior importance. But his allusion to such prayers in his "Confession" on the Lord's Supper was not an opinion likely to prolong the practice. We quote his words as given in Bishop Dahle's "Life after Death":—

"Since Scripture does not say anything about prayer for the dead, I do not consider it a sin if a man in his private devotions prays in terms like these: 'Dear Lord, if it is the case that this soul can be helped, then do Thou graciously, &c.,' and when this hath been done once or twice, let that suffice."

Luther on  
prayer for  
the dead.

The result of the great Reformer's teachings resulted in prayers for the dead being soon put an end to in the Lutheran Church. The Lutheran Church repudiated strongly the doctrine that the Lord's Supper was a sacrifice, although it retained the name of "altar," &c., and clung to the doctrine of a "real presence" "in, with, and under" the elements of bread and wine. But that "presence" was supposed to

The  
Lutheran  
Church.

be imparted only while the bread was being eaten and the wine being drunk by the communicants. The Lutheran Church, therefore, cut up by the roots the idea of masses being offered for the dead, and it denied the existence of a purgatory.

Effect of  
praying  
for dead.

Prayers for the dead under such circumstances soon passed away. As revived in our Church to-day, they certainly lead to the re-introduction of masses for the dead. They lead up distinctly to a belief in purgatory, which is plainly avowed by not a few, and those who now claim some consideration for their weakness, are certain after a little to assume a different tone, and speak of the cruelty of those who refuse to offer up prayers for the dead. The solemn duty of resisting an error in its commencement should be more often insisted on, for the admission of any practice not based on the teaching of Holy Scripture is certain to lead ultimately to grievous doctrinal departures from the faith.

Jewish  
Literature.

In giving a brief survey of Jewish literature outside the limits of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, we have, for practical purposes, refrained from entering into matters which would only tend to confuse the general reader. The

80 Masseketh (*Treatise*) Aboth, or, as more generally termed, the Pirke Aboth ("Chapters of the Fathers"), has been treated as a separate book, apart from the numerous works among which it is found in the Babylonian Talmud. The Pirke Aboth is the "golden book" of Talmudic Judaism, and forms part of many popular Jewish manuals of prayer and praise. It is therefore known in circles unacquainted with the other writings of the Talmud. It is specially important as containing a number of moral sayings of the great Rabbis who lived prior to the Christian era, and as late as the end of the second century after Christ. The exact date of the Treatise is unknown, but as it contains no names of the third century the material of which it is composed is of hoar antiquity.

The Jewish Midrashim (or *Expositions*) are of a much later date. The *Siphre* (alluded to by Dean Luckock), which is itself an ancient Midrash, but is not usually included under that general title, has portions which may also go back to the second and third centuries. The Midrash on the Book of Koheleth or Ecclesiastes is, however, probably a production of the Middle Ages. But even that Midrash contains traditions and paraphrases of a

The Midrashim.

b

far older period. The Midrashim are not conclusive evidence in any matter in which dates are of special importance. When, however, an exposition given of any particular passage conflicts with the opinions commonly held by Jews in the Middle Ages, it may be assumed as probable that such an exposition is earlier than those in the midst of which it may be embedded.

The  
Targums.

The Targums have not, as far as we know, been carefully examined with the view of discovering passages which cast light upon Jewish eschatology. Such an investigation would require more time than has been at our disposal. Moreover, that examination would have probably resulted in little more than a negative conclusion. The common Jewish opinion on such points is sufficiently clear from the literature surveyed in the present work.

Subjects  
not dis-  
cussed.

The subjects of eternal punishment, conditional immortality, partial or universal restitution, and many such like, will not be found discussed in this volume. Those subjects are connected with matters which lie beyond the horizon of "the Intermediate State," and could not be satisfactorily discussed within the compass of a short work. And inasmuch as we have been unable



to enter fully into the discussion of such subjects, we have in general avoided expressing our opinion about them. We are only too sensible that much has been left unsaid even upon the particular subject to which we have specially directed attention; but we hope that the present work may restrain some from entering upon "by-paths," which have in former times led many to depart from "the narrow way" pointed out so clearly in the revelations of the New Testament.

In conclusion, we desire to thank the Rev. Charles Neil, M.A., Vicar of St. Mary's, Stamford Brook, London, for having kindly given valuable assistance in the correction of the proof-sheets of this little volume.

90 BOLINGBROKE GROVE,  
WANDSWORTH COMMON,  
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# THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

## CHAPTER I

### OLD TESTAMENT REVELATIONS OF A LIFE AFTER DEATH

THE close of the nineteenth century has witnessed a remarkable revival of the practice of prayers for the dead. The practice has been in use among the Jews for many centuries, and prevails among the largest portion of those "who profess and call themselves Christians." It is therefore important to investigate what ideas concerning the Intermediate State are set forth in the writings of the Old and New Testaments, and in the Jewish writings prior to the Christian era or composed in the early centuries after Christ, in order to ascertain if they contain any traces of the practice of prayers

Revival of  
prayers for  
the dead.

A

for the dead. We shall also examine whether that practice prevailed among Christians during the earlier ages of Christianity.

A partial inquiry.

To investigate this subject in a manner intelligible to the ordinary English reader is the object of the present volume. We do not propose to examine minutely all the statements on the subject of the state of the dead which may be found in the Old and New Testament Scriptures. For such an inquiry would require for its discussion a much larger volume than the present, and would necessitate an examination of many subjects such as those which have been discussed more or less satisfactorily in the larger works mentioned below.<sup>1</sup>

If we confined our attention to prayers for the

<sup>1</sup> Though Friederich Böttcher's work, *De Inferis*, is written from a widely different theological standpoint than our own, it is so suggestive that it deserves special mention. There is no work with which we are acquainted, written by any theologian of later date, which exhibits so extensive a knowledge of the entire subject. The work was only designed for scientific critics, and is far too heavy for modern taste. Its title is, *De Inferis rebusque post mortem futuris ex Hebræorum et Græcorum opinionibus*. Libri Duo. Scripsit Fridericus Böttcher. Dresdæ, 1846. Böttcher was a Hebraist of great ability. His gigantic work, *Ausführliches Lehrbuch der Heb. Sprache* (though only completed up to the end of the *Formenlehre*), was published after his death in two large volumes under the editorship of F. Mühlau in 1866 and 1868. Bishop Lars Nielsen Dahle's interesting work, "Life after Death and the Future of the Kingdom of God," translated from



dead, without further reference to the Intermediate state, the writings of the Old Testament might be passed over without much notice. For no theologian has ventured to affirm that the duty of offering up prayers for the dead formed any part of the Old Testament revelation.

Old Test.  
does not  
enjoin such  
prayers.

But although that fact may be generally admitted, the late Rev. Dr. R. F. Littledale, in a short but important leaflet on the subject, has appealed to not a few passages of the Old Testament in such a manner as to make an ordinary reader imagine that many passages even in the Old Testament have a distinct bearing on the question.

Dr. R. F.  
Littledale.

"We are also taught," affirms that well-known controversialist, "that death does not stop the

Prayers  
cited by  
him.

the Norse by the Rev. John Beveridge, M.A., B.D. (T. & T. Clark, 1896), is more speculative, and far less scientific or satisfactory than the work of Böttcher. The student will find material in the work of the German theologian which he will look for in vain in the book of the eminent Norwegian Bishop. There is much on the subject in general contained in Professor S. D. F. Salmond's important work on the "Christian Doctrine of Immortality" (third edition, T. & T. Clark, 1897), but that work, so far as it treats of the Scriptures, deals only with a particular portion of the field of research, and confines itself chiefly to that portion, so that it does not discuss a number of passages which come under review in the treatise of Böttcher. Professor R. H. Charles's work on "Eschatology" (just published by A. & C. Black, Edinburgh) is most important, and cannot fail to attract the attention of scholars.

work of God in the soul, but that it continues. So in Psalm lxxxiv. we read, 'They will go from strength to strength, and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.' And 'The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day' (Prov. iv. 18). This exactly agrees with St. Paul's words, 'He which hath begun a good work in you will perform (or finish) it until the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil. i. 6). 'Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Phil. i. 10). 'I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Thess. v. 23). If St. Paul had held the modern notions on the subject, he would have prayed merely that his converts might persevere till the day of their death."<sup>1</sup>

Free handling of  
Scripture.

The argument so presented is misleading. Its true character will be perceived when attention is called to the fact that not one of the passages cited has reference to the state of departed souls

<sup>1</sup> "Prayers for the Dead," by Richard Frederick Littledale, LL.D., D.C.L. London: G. I. Palmer & Sons, 32 Little Queen Street.

between death and resurrection. No doubt if it could be proved that prayers for the dead were enjoined or recommended in Holy Scripture, such passages might fairly be adduced as illustrative at least of the principle underlying the practice. But inasmuch as no such passages exist in the Old Testament, such a free handling of Scripture must be condemned. No modern expositor with any respect for his reputation would venture to maintain that Eccles. xi. 3 can be interpreted as referring to the state of the dead, although that passage is frequently so interpreted in Patristic writings,<sup>1</sup> and even in other writings which may possibly contain echoes of an earlier period.

It would be foreign to our main object to discuss the narrative of the real or delusive appearance of Samuel after death (1 Sam. xxviii.), or even to examine into the meaning of such passages as Job xix. 25-27, or the other remarkable passages in that book, which would

Passages  
passed  
over.

<sup>1</sup> Some modern writers, unacquainted with the fact stated above, have ventured to describe the interpretation above referred to as a specimen of Protestant exegesis. The Puritan divines who thus applied, or misapplied, the text were, however, only following too faithfully in the steps of older expositors.

have to be noticed if we were writing a complete treatise on the Old Testament ideas of the state after death. The great Messianic passage in Ps. xvi. 9-11, and the possible or probable reference to the final glorious awakening after death to be found in Ps. xvii. 15, can only be referred to.<sup>1</sup> The great poetic description of the descent of the king of Babylon to the under-world (Isa. xiv. 9-15), and its relation to later passages in the prophets, such as Ezek. xxxii. 17-32, must likewise be passed over.

Ps. xlix.

There are, however, certain Old Testament passages which require special notice. The most important perhaps is in Ps. xlix. 13-15. The Psalmist there depicts the folly of the ungodly who trust in their wealth and not in the living God, albeit their sayings and conduct may be warmly approved by the men who come after them, and who follow blindly in their footsteps. The future of such fools and brutish persons in the Unseen world is then depicted :—

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<sup>1</sup> We cannot agree with Professor Charles ("Eschatology," p. 73) that the context of this Psalm does not admit of a reference to a future life. But that subject cannot be discussed satisfactorily in a footnote.

"They are appointed as a flock for Sheol (the Under-world),<sup>1</sup>

Death shall be their shepherd :

And the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning ;

And their beauty shall be for Sheol to consume, that there be no more habitation for it.

But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol :

For he shall receive me."—Ps. xlix. 14, 15.<sup>2</sup>

Although the passage is highly poetic, its meaning is plain, namely, that notwithstanding the forgetfulness which men exhibit with regard to what may occur after death, the ungodly are appointed and gathered together as a flock for the Under-world. Into its dark recesses, when the night of life at last arrives, they must all descend,

The ex-  
position.

<sup>1</sup> Sheol (the *Under-world*) in the Old Testament is represented by Hades (the *Unseen*) in the writings of the New Testament. They are both negative terms, though often used in such a manner as to suggest the darker meaning. For, after all, the state of the dead is a state originating with sin against God, and when the final victory shall be won, such a state will exist no more. Hence even Hades is represented in the visions of the Revelation as cast with Death into the lake of fire ; the righteous being no longer within its portals nor subject any more to the law of death (Rev. xx. 14).

<sup>2</sup> We must protest against texts critically emended after a critic's individual opinion (such as that suggested by Cheyne in his "Jewish Religious Life"), and against all conclusions drawn from such "emended" texts. No stream can rise higher than its fountain, and the authority of such critically emended texts is simply that of the critic who has suggested the emendations. This self-evident platitude is often forgotten. See Charles on the passage in his "Eschatology" (pp. 73-75), although we do not altogether agree with his exegesis.

Death the  
shepherd  
of the  
wicked.

whatever their position or rank may be. In that Under-world they shall be shepherded by Death, here personified by the Psalmist almost as "the king of terrors" (comp. Job xviii. 14). Death is the shepherd of the wicked. They fall under his power and rule. For although the righteous also descend like the ungodly to the Under-world, they are in charge of another shepherd who can keep them safe even within its gloomy portals (Ps. xxiii. 1, 4). The Psalmist does not indeed here distinctly mention the descent of the righteous into the Unseen-world, nor does he speak of their protection within its gates. But in verse 6 the Psalmist expresses his personal conviction that God will redeem him from the power of the Under-world, and not hand him over to the full control or authority of Death. For if God receives a soul, that soul will abide safely under the shadow of the Almighty (Ps. xci. 1). The beauty of the ungodly shall, however, consume away. Their beauty, after their earthly life has ended, will have no more a dwelling-place, for Death will consume and destroy it. And in the morning, when the dark night shall be past and gone for ever, the upright

shall have the dominion over the wicked. The latter thought is more distinctly expressed by a later prophet of Israel, "Ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I do make, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. iv. 3).

There is, no doubt, very little revealed in such passages about the Intermediate state. One thing, however, appears to be clearly indicated, namely, that the ungodly in that place of waiting for the final judgment (Eccles. xii. 14) are in a state of misery and distress. Of the godly it is said, that even while they remain in Sheol, they are delivered from the power of the "Under-world," and are preserved in security. Nothing, however, is revealed in any of these passages concerning the training, development, or purification of the righteous in that Under-world. The glad hope alone is expressed that the darkness of the Under-world will not endure for ever; and that in the morning (the morning of the resurrection, as later revelation makes plain) the righteous shall be manifested as victors over Death and over the wicked.

There is little doubt that Hades has for the

The godly  
in Sheol.

Hades  
trans-  
formed by  
Christ.

righteous been completely transformed by the death of Jesus. We object to go a step further than the New Testament revelation takes us. Hence we are opposed to all imaginary pictures of what was achieved by Christ's death upon the Cross. We maintain that no account has been given of Christ's work in Hades. But that He performed a great work there is an intuition of faith, justified by His own blessed statement, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death," or, as the Jews interpreted it, "shall never taste of death" (John viii. 51, 52).

Isaiah's  
testimony.

The prophet Isaiah (lvii. 1-2) adds several additional features to the Old Testament revelation of the Intermediate state. The description given by that prophet is short, but satisfactory. "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He entereth into peace; they rest in their beds, each one that walketh in his uprightness." That passage in Isaiah is by no means identical in meaning with the statement in Job iii. 17, "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest." For the



“peace” into which the souls of the righteous in Isaiah are said to enter is a peace which exclusively belongs to the righteous. And therefore the prophet Isaiah, at the close of the chapter, declares, “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked” (lvii. 21).

We have spoken elsewhere at more length on the subject of the obscurity of the Old Testament revelation concerning the future state.<sup>1</sup> It would only be repeating what we have said in our former work to discuss the numerous questions affecting the state of the dead to which the Book of Ecclesiastes, or Koheleth, has given rise. Those questions are no doubt of considerable importance, but they have no bearing, direct or indirect, on the subject of prayers for the dead. It may, however, be useful briefly to notice the remarkable statement which occurs in Prov. xv. 24, and is probably referred to in Eccles. iii. 21. The translation of that passage in the Revised Version is more accurate than

Obscurity  
of Old  
Test.  
revelation.

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. vii. of my work, “The Book of Koheleth, commonly called Ecclesiastes, considered in relation to Modern Criticism and to the Doctrines of Modern Pessimism. With a Critical and Grammatical Commentary and a Revised Translation. The Donnellan Lectures for 1880-81.” Hodder & Stoughton, 1883.

that of the Authorised Version. "To the wise the way of life (goeth) upward, that he may depart from Sheol (the Under-world) beneath." That inspired aphorism seems to refer to the same subject which is alluded to in Ps. xlix., namely, that the way of life may indeed lead through Sheol, for into that Under-world even the righteous, at least in Old Testament days, had to go down. But the path of the righteous, though it passed through Sheol, did not terminate there. The wicked woman, with all that appertains to her, is, according to the wise man, destined to sink down to death, for the tracks of her chariot wheels ever point towards the shades (Prov. ii. 18), where the Rephaim (the old giant-opposers of God) lie gathered together in the pit, awaiting the final judgment (Isa. xxiv. 22). For her, and those that follow after her to the end, there is no escape from "the wrath to come." Downward, ever downward, is the path of the wicked; upward, ever upward leads the path of the holy.

Final victory over death.

The final victory over death was predicted by Isaiah (xxv. 7, 8), and by Hosea (xiii. 14). It was connected by the latter prophet with

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## OLD TESTAMENT REVELATIONS 13

a release from the power of Sheol. Such was the Old Testament anticipation of the victory described by St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 51-57), who, in his picture of the glory of the resurrection, appropriately combines together the predictions of both those great prophets of Israel.

## CHAPTER II

### THE STATE OF THE DEAD DEPICTED IN PRE-CHRISTIAN AND EARLY POST- CHRISTIAN JEWISH WRITINGS

#### § 1. *The Book of Jesus the Son of Sirach*

IN an examination into the opinions and practices of the Jews, in what for convenience' sake may be termed the post-canonical period, the views of Jesus the Son of Sirach, or Ben Sira, are entitled to particular notice. That book is perhaps more generally known as the "Book of Ecclesiasticus." Ben Sira's book was called "Ecclesiasticus" because it was widely used in the Christian Church of early days as an ecclesiastical reading-book. The original language in which the work was composed was probably

Book of  
Ben Sira.

Heb. Text.

Hebrew, and many scholars assert that no inconsiderable portion of the work in the Hebrew language has been recently discovered. Whether, however, the Hebrew text discovered be really the

original work, or a Hebrew translation made in the middle ages, is a question which now excites much attention, and is not unlikely to do so for some time to come.<sup>1</sup> The book has, however, for many centuries been known through the medium of the Greek translation, which was executed by the grandson of the original writer, and is

Greek  
transla-  
tion.

<sup>1</sup> See "The Original Hebrew of a Portion of Ecclesiasticus (xxxix. 16 to xlix. 11), together with the Early Versions and an English Translation, followed by the Quotations from Ben Sira in Rabbinical Literature." Edited by A. E. Cowley, M.A., and Ad. Neubauer, M.A. With two Facsimiles. Oxford. Clarendon Press, 1897. Also, "Facsimiles of Ecclesiasticus" (Bodleian MS. Heb. E. 62): "The Wisdom of Ben Sira. Portions of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, from Hebrew Manuscripts in the Cairo Genizah Collection, presented to the University of Cambridge by the Editors." Edited for the Syndics of the University Press, by S. Schechter, M.A., Litt.D., Reader in Rabbinic in the University of Cambridge, and Professor of Hebrew in the University of London; and C. Taylor, D.D., Master of St. John's College, Cambridge. (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1899.) Professor D. S. Margoliouth has, however, denied that the Hebrew text so discovered is anything more than a Hebrew translation from the Greek text, made by a Bagdad Jew in the tenth century. He bases his argument partly upon the various translations, found on the margin of the MSS. in question. Professor Margoliouth's essay on the subject is entitled, "Origin of the 'Original Hebrew' of Ecclesiasticus," by D. S. Margoliouth, M.A., Laudian Professor of Arabic in the University of Oxford. (James Parker & Co., 1899.) The matter has been further discussed in numerous letters and articles published in the columns of the *Guardian*, and in the pages of the *Expositor* and of the *Expository Times*, and elsewhere. M. Israel Levi, who was at first distinctly opposed to Professor Margoliouth's view, has, on the study of the new pages published by Drs. Schechter and Taylor, expressed his conviction that the Hebrew discovered is not the original Hebrew of Ben Sira. We are inclined to hold the same opinion. But the last word has not yet been spoken in this controversy.

preserved in the Septuagint Version. That Greek translation was probably made not later than 132 B.C. The original work cannot be assigned to a later date than 170 B.C., and may even go back fifty years earlier.<sup>1</sup>

Canonicity  
not dis-  
cussed  
here.

The Book of Ecclesiasticus is viewed as canonical by the Church of Rome. The opinion of the Greek Church on the point is somewhat uncertain. But the question of its canonicity or uncanonicity is a matter which may here be passed over in silence.

Ben Sira was an eminently practical writer, and on matters which lie beyond the knowledge of man, he gives the following wise direction: "Seek not the things that are too hard for thee, and search not out things that are above thy strength. The things that have been commanded thee, think thereupon; for thou hast no need of the things that are secret" (Chap. iii. 21, 22).

Consistently with such advice, his book contains little on the question of the future state, whether final or intermediate. What, however,

<sup>1</sup> This special question is discussed in my "Donnellan Lectures on Ecclesiastes," in Chap. ii., on "The Book of Koheleth and the Book of Jesus the Son of Sirach."

is stated on the point in the book deserves special attention. Thus, in Chapter vii. 17, we read :

“Humble thy soul greatly, for the punishment of the ungodly is fire and the worm.”<sup>1</sup> Ben Ben Sira's  
reference  
to “Hell.”

Sira alludes here to the Valley of Hinnom, which had long been the scene of horrible idolatry, to prevent the recurrence of which the valley was polluted by the pious king Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 10-14), who made it the receptacle of all kinds of offal. In order to consume the carcasses that were thrown out into that valley, fires had to be kept continually burning, and the worms consumed that which the fire did not destroy. The prophet Isaiah refers to those well-known features of the place in Chap. lxvi. 24. Those particulars are also alluded to in Judith xvi. 17 (see p. 48), and our Lord calls attention to them in the discourse recorded in Mark ix. 43-48. (See Chap. V. of this work.)

Ben Sira urges men to consider their latter end (Chap. vii. 36). “In all thy matters (*i.e.* in

<sup>1</sup> The newly-discovered Hebrew text reads : “Abase pride very exceedingly ; for the hope of man is the worm.” This reading has the support of the Syriac version, and also, according to Charles (“Eschatology,” p. 165) that of the best MSS. of the Ethiopic version. But chapter xxi. 9, 10 (see above) is in favour of the Greek text. The Hebrew text of the latter passage is not extant.

whatsoever thou takest in hand) remember thy latter end (τὰ ἔσχατα) and thou shalt never do amiss." (He speaks similarly in Chap. ix. 12 : "Delight not in the delights of the ungodly." Remember that they shall not go unpunished into the grave" (ἕως ᾧδου) lit. "as far as Hades," "the Unseen." And afterwards, with a different object in view, he remarks: "Remember that death will not tarry, and that the covenant of the grave (Hades, *the Unseen*) is not showed unto thee" <sup>1</sup> (Chap. xiv. 12).

Fire and  
the pit.

In Chap. xxi. 9, 10, we read: "The congregation of wicked men is as tow wrapped together, and the end of them is a flame of fire. The way of sinners is made smooth with stones, and at the last end thereof is the pit of Hades." This, taken in connection with the statement in Chap. vii. 17, might be supposed to indicate that Ben Sira believed in the final destruction of the wicked in the Unseen place, or in the world beyond the grave.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew of this text, as rendered by Schechter and Taylor, is : "Remember there is no luxury in Sheol; and death doth not tarry; and the decree of Sheol (?) hath not been declared to thee."

<sup>2</sup> The Vulgate translates the last clause: "Et in fine illorum inferi, et tenebræ, et pœnæ." The Douay Version is "and in their end is



More remarkable, however, is the passage in Chap. xxii. 11 :—

“Weep for the dead, for light hath failed him ;  
 And weep for a fool, for understanding hath failed him :  
 Weep more sweetly for the dead, because he hath found rest :  
 But the life of the fool is worse than death.  
 Seven days are the days of mourning for the dead ;  
 But for a fool and an ungodly man, all the days of his life.”

Duty to  
the dead.

Had Ben Sira known of prayers for the dead, he might well here have alluded to such petitions. But on that point he is as silent as the grave. The same theme is touched upon elsewhere, and is further alluded to again in Chap. xxxviii. 16–23, where the writer is equally silent on prayers for the dead :—

“My son, let thy tears fall over the dead,  
 And as one that suffereth grievously begin lamentation ;  
 And wind up his body according to his due,  
 And neglect not his burial.  
 Make bitter weeping, and make passionate wailing.  
 And let thy mourning be according to his desert,  
 For one day, or two, lest thou be evil spoken of.<sup>1</sup>

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hell, and darkness, and pains.” But that translation adds somewhat to Ben Sira’s statement.

<sup>1</sup> That is, lest thou be spoken of as one destitute of human feeling, and utterly devoid of human sympathy. There is no occasion to blame the writer here for his icy coldness, as Fritzsche has done, or with Bissell, to regard his remarks “as a direct encouragement to hypocrisy.” The Hebrew of Schechter and Taylor, though in several points different, does not substantially alter the sense of the passage.

And so be comforted for thy sorrow,  
 For of sorrow cometh death,  
 And sorrow of heart will bow down the strength.  
 In calamity sorrow also remaineth ;  
 And the poor man's life is grievous to the heart.  
 Give not thy heart unto sorrow :  
 Put it away, remembering the last end (τὰ ἔσχατα) ;  
 Forget it (*i.e.* death) not, for there is no returning again.<sup>1</sup>  
 Him thou shalt not profit, and thou wilt hurt thyself.  
 Remember the sentence upon him ;<sup>2</sup>  
 For so also shall thine be (Comp. Koh. [Eccles.] vii. 2).  
 'Yesterday for me [the dead man is here supposed to be  
     speaking]  
 And to-day for thee.'  
 When the dead is at rest, let his remembrance rest,  
 And be comforted for him, when his spirit departeth from  
     him."<sup>3</sup>

No prayers  
 recom-  
 mended.

A philosopher who could thus write did not dream of prayers for the dead. The last verse must not be pressed too far ; but it certainly excludes the idea of the writer's supposing that

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Koh. [Eccles.] viii. 8, "There is no discharge in that war." Job vii. 9-10.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek for *sentence* is *κτῆμα*. The passage is not extant in Hebrew. Compare, however, Chap. xli. 3. In the latter passage of which the supposed Hebrew original is extant, the Hebrew is חֲקֻכִּים, *thy sentence*, or decree.

<sup>3</sup> Schechter and Taylor render the Hebrew of the last two lines : "Remember him not, for there is no hope for him ; what shalt thou profit him (?)? And thou shalt hurt thyself. When the dead is at rest, let his remembrance rest ; and be comforted when his soul departeth."

friends on earth could do anything which might benefit the departed soul.

We may pass over the passage in Chap. xxviii. 21-23, in which the torturing fire of a slandering tongue is compared to death and Hades, and in which the fire of reviling is spoken of, which, in the case of the ungodly, shall "not be quenched." One may call to mind the "shame and everlasting contempt" mentioned in Dan. xii. 2.<sup>1</sup> It is not necessary to notice Chap. xxx. 17, where death is spoken of as "better than a bitter life." In the latter case it may be noticed that the oldest MSS. omit the expression "eternal rest," which is there employed in reference to death.<sup>2</sup>

Life and  
rest.]

<sup>1</sup> We regret to have to differ widely from Professor Charles in his interpretation of Dan. xii. 2 ("Eschatology," p. 121, and pp. 132-136). We do not believe, although Daniel does use the term "*many*," that he limits the resurrection spoken of to the martyr Jews (the pre-eminently good) and to the apostates, conceiving that all outside those two classes would remain for ever in Sheol. But Professor Charles is perfectly correct in seeing a reference in that passage to Isaiah lxvi. 24, inasmuch as the word מִן־הַחַיִּים, variously rendered in our English versions by "*abhorring*" and "*contempt*," is found only in those two passages. We hope to discuss the passage in Daniel in our forthcoming work on that prophet, which, owing to peculiar circumstances, has been long delayed, and which will embrace the substance of the Grinfield Lectures on that Prophet delivered before the University of Oxford.

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew translation of Schechter and Taylor renders the verse: "Better is it to die than a life of vanity; and eternal rest than continual pain. Better is it to die than life that is evil; and to go down to Sheol than lasting pain."

Judgment  
after death.

The Greek translation of Chap. xli. 8-11, might lead one to imagine that in that passage Ben Sira was referring to judgment after death: "Woe unto you, ungodly men, which have forsaken the law of the Most High God! If ye be born, ye shall be born to a curse; if ye die, a curse shall be your portion. All things that are of the earth shall go back to the earth. So the ungodly shall go from a curse unto perdition (ἀπὸ κατάρσας εἰς ἀπώλειαν). The mourning of men is about their bodies (ἐν σώμασι αὐτῶν), but the name of sinners being evil shall be blotted out."<sup>1</sup>

Hebrew  
text omits.

The newly-discovered Hebrew text gives, however, a different sense to the passage. We quote Cowley and Neubauer's translations with their conjectures as to the words missing in the

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. xli. 4 is translated in the Revised Version, "There is no inquisition of life (ἐλεγχμός ζωῆς) in the grave" or Hades. Its meaning seems plain. One will not inquire in Hades whether one may have lived on earth "ten, or a hundred, or a thousand years." The Hebrew text (which as it stands in the text as a whole is unintelligible, is made more intelligible by the reading in the margin) has תוכחות, and is therefore rendered by Neubauer and Cowley: "There are no corrections in Sheol." Charles ("Eschatology," pp. 162-164) regards this as meaning that the writer asserts that "retribution is confined to this life," in which case, as he perceives, two doctrines concerning retribution would be set forth in this book. But the Hebrew text is too uncertain, even if it were clearly the original of Ben Sira, to justify in our opinion any such conclusion.

MS. "[Woe] to [you, ye wicked]. If [ye increase, it shall be into] the bands of bodily mishap; [and if ye] beget, it shall be for sighing. If ye stumble, it shall be for perpetual joy; and if ye die, it shall be for a curse. All things from nothing turn to nothing again, so the godless [go] from emptiness to emptiness. The vanity of man is in his body, but a godly name shall not be cut off."

The expression employed (Chap. xlv. 11) in reference to the Judges of Israel, "May their memorial be blessed" (*εὐή το μνημόσυνον αὐτῶν ἐν εὐλογίαις*) is in the Hebrew, *יה זכרם לברכה*, "May their memory be blessed." The Hebrew text adds, "And their name succeed to their sons," omitting altogether the prayer that follows (verse 12) in the Greek translation, "May their bones flourish again out of their place, and may the name of them that have been honoured be renewed upon their children." A similar prayer is found in the Greek Version in the mention made of the twelve minor prophets: "Also of the twelve prophets, may the bones flourish again out of their place" (Chap. xlix. 10). In the latter passage the Hebrew has the prayer: "Moreover the

"May  
their me-  
morial be  
blessed!"

twelve prophets, may their strength flour[ish out of their pla]ces." The note given by the editors, in the opening page of their preface, may well be quoted here: "The many passages in which the translator has misunderstood his original, written only some sixty years before his time, may perhaps serve as a warning to those scholars who are inclined to overrate the authority of the LXX. Version of the Old Testament."

Prayers for  
dead un-  
known.

From this list of passages, which are all which can be supposed, directly or indirectly, to allude to the subject before us, it may safely be concluded that Ben Sira had no knowledge of prayers for the dead as a practice customary among the Jews of his day and generation.

## § 2. The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon

On questions affecting the future state, the Book of Wisdom is considerably in advance of the wisdom of Ben Sira. The Book of Wisdom was written between 150 B.C. and 50 B.C. Its writer was an Egyptian Jew, who wrote in Greek, and adopted the pseudonym of Solomon, because that monarch was popularly connected with all

that kind of literature. Inasmuch as the Alex-  
andrian sceptics had represented the teachings of  
the Book of Koheleth to be favourable to their  
views, the writer boldly combats their opinions,  
and the opening portion of his work reads almost  
like an Anti-Ecclesiastes.<sup>1</sup>

The Alex-  
andrian  
sceptics.

The doctrine of the writer concerning the Last  
Things (τὰ ἔσχατα) is to be found in Chaps. i.  
to ix., in which chapters the "mysteries of God"  
(μυστήρια Θεοῦ), or in other words, God's secret  
counsels, are spoken of. The writer maintains  
that wicked men, blinded by transgression, are  
wholly ignorant of God's secret counsels (Chap. ii.  
21, 22). Compare the teaching of Ps. xxv. 14.

"Mysteries  
of God."

According to the Book of Wisdom, "God  
created man for incorruption" (ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ), or  
for immortality (Chap. ii. 23), but by the envy of  
the Devil death entered into the world. Hades,  
or destruction, obtained thus, in consequence of  
man's sin, "royal dominion upon earth" (Chap.  
i. 14). Men madly invite death to take up  
its abode with them, and make a covenant with  
their enemy (Chap. i. 15, 16). "Righteousness is

Man  
created for  
immor-  
tality.

<sup>1</sup> See my Donnellan Lectures on Ecclesiastes, Chap. iii., "The Book of Wisdom and the Book of Koheleth."

immortal" (*ἀθανατός*) (Chap. i. 15), "and incorruption (*ἀφθαρσία*) bringing near unto God" (Chap. vi. 19), for "in kinship unto wisdom is immortality" (*ἀθανασία ἐστὶν ἐν συγγενείᾳ σοφίας*) (Chap. viii. 17). See also Chap. xv. 3.

Souls of  
righteous  
in happi-  
ness.

The views propounded in the Book of Wisdom as to the future state are, as far as they go, clear and distinct. "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died. And their departure was accounted to be their hurt; and their journeying away from us to be their ruin, but they are in peace. For even if in the sight of men they be punished, their hope is full of immortality; and having borne a little chastening, they receive great good, because God made trial of them, and found them worthy of himself" (Chap. iii. 1-5). The story of Enoch (though not by name)<sup>1</sup> is referred to in Chap. iv. 7 ff., as a striking illustration of the lot of the righteous, for "a righteous man though he die

<sup>1</sup> One of the peculiarities which distinguishes the Book of Wisdom is that although the work abounds with allusions to the patriarchs and the other heroes of the Old Testament times, no proper name of person, town, river, or country is mentioned throughout the book. See Donnellan Lectures on Ecclesiastes, pp. 60 ff.



before his time shall be at rest" (Chap. iv. 7). The righteous live for ever, and receive a crown of dignity and diadem of beauty (Chap. v. 15, 16).

On the other hand, the ungodly are described as falling under death, and experiencing its bitterness. They "have no hope, and in the day of decision (*διαγνώσεως*, another reading is *ἀναγνώσεως*) have no consolation" (Chap. iii. 18). The wicked shall behold the joys of the righteous, but "God shall dash them speechless to the ground, and shake them from the foundations; and they shall lie utterly waste, and they shall be in anguish, and their memory shall perish. They shall come, when their sins are reckoned up, with coward fear, and their lawless deeds shall convict them to their face" (Chap. iv. 19, 20); "while the righteous shall stand forth boldly before their former foes" (Chap. v. 1 ff.).

Misery of  
ungodly.

It is scarcely necessary to call attention to the assumption which pervades the whole book, namely, that judgment follows immediately after death. No special mention is made of the resurrection, but it might be too much to say that the writer did not believe in it. He had, however, no idea of prayer being offered up for the dead.

Judgment  
after death.

As he was an Alexandrian Jew of eminence and ability, his ideas on "the last things" are of special importance, as showing the sentiments of what we might call the Broad School of Jewish expositors. The idea of gradual purification, through suffering in a future state, of individuals whom death might surprise before being "perfected" (compare Chap. iv. 13-16) never appears to have crossed the mind of the writer of the Book of Wisdom.<sup>1</sup>

### § 3. The Second Book of Maccabees

Books of  
Maccabees.

The writings known as First, Second, Third, and Fourth Maccabees are not consecutive historical works, like the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, but books wholly independent of one another.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Deane, "Book of Wisdom," on the passage in question, as also Grimm's note.

<sup>2</sup> The Third and Fourth Books are not included in the collection known to the ordinary English reader under the title of the Apocrypha. They are written in Greek, and an English translation of them is included in Mr. Churton's useful work, "The Uncanonical and Apocryphal Scriptures," London 1884. The Third Book is a history of events which occurred before the Maccabean era, and is of some value. Fourth Maccabees was written in the praise of the martyrs of the Maccabean period, and is of little historical value, though in some aspects it is peculiarly interesting. See § 4 of this chapter.

## THE SECOND BOOK OF MACCABEES 29

The Second Book of the Maccabees is considerably inferior to the First Book in historical value, and for convenience' sake may be divided into two distinct portions. The opening portion, namely, that which includes Chap. i.—ii. 19, has scarcely any connection with that which follows. It is composed of two documents, the first (Chap. i. 1–10) purporting to be a letter from the Jews of Jerusalem to their brethren of Egypt, concerning the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple instituted by Judas Maccabeus. The second document contained in this portion (Chap. i. 11–Chap. ii. 18) is a letter purporting to give an account of the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, which records several marvels asserted to have occurred at that time.

Opening  
of 2 Macc.

The second portion of the book (Chap. ii. 19 to end of the work) professes to be an epitome of an historical work by Jason of Cyrene, and is in the Revised Version rightly separated by a blank from the portion which precedes it. Cyrene was a Greek town, and capital of the district called from it Cyrenaica (often Pentapolis). The district extended along the Mediterranean Sea westward of Egypt. It was subject to Egypt

Second  
part of  
2 Macc. a  
compila-  
tion.

in the time of Ptolemy Lagos, 321 B.C. Jason of Cyrene was, therefore, a Greek-speaking Jew. Neither he himself nor his epitomiser were Palestinian Jews. The First Book of the Maccabees was originally written in Hebrew, although only the Greek translation is extant. The Second Book, on the other hand, affords clear proofs of having been an original Greek composition.

History  
contained.

Second Maccabees contains a history of about sixteen years from 176 B.C., when Seleucus IV. Philopator, occupied the throne of Syria, down to Judas Maccabeus' victory over Nicanor in 160 B.C. The book must have been written between 140 B.C. and 30 B.C., and most probably nearer to the later than the earlier date.

The Onias  
temple in  
Egypt.

During that period, and for a considerable time afterwards, there was in existence a great Jewish temple in Egypt which rivalled the temple at Jerusalem. Onias IV. was the son of Onias III., and therefore probably the legal heir to the High-Priesthood at Jerusalem. But, owing to the troublous state of Jerusalem, Onias IV. saw that there was little prospect of his ever attaining that lofty dignity. He therefore fled to

Egypt, and having been favourably received by the king, Ptolemy VI. Philometor, obtained the royal permission to erect in Leontopolis (in the name of Heliopolis) a temple to Jehovah. The temple was constructed on the model of the great temple at Jerusalem, and was served by legal priests of the order of Aaron. The temple of Heliopolis was the religious centre of the Egyptian Jews from its foundation in 160 B.C. until A.D. 73, when it was probably closed, and destroyed by the Romans. The Egyptian Jews did not, however, completely sever themselves from their brethren in Palestine. They frequently kept the feasts at Jerusalem, and appear to have sent contributions to the revenues of the temple there. But the existence of a rival temple in Egypt had considerable influence in weakening the connection between the Egyptian and Palestinian Jews. The Egyptian High Priests appear to have been men of better character than those at Jerusalem. From the statements of Josephus<sup>1</sup> it appears that the Egyptian Jews maintained that the prophet Isaiah had predicted

Egyptian  
and Pales-  
tinian  
Jews.

<sup>1</sup> See Josephus, *Antiq.* xiii., cap. 3, § 1, and *Bell. Jud.*, vii. cap. x., § 4.

the erection of such a temple to Jehovah in the land of Egypt (Isa. xix. 19-22).<sup>1</sup>

Egyptian  
Jews  
mainly  
schismatic.

As the Egyptian Jews were therefore to a considerable extent schismatic in their practices, the opinion of Egyptian Jews (when unsupported by other evidence) cannot be regarded satisfactory evidence in proof of the doctrines or practices of the Jews in Palestine. The Alexandrian Jews were largely influenced by Greek philosophy. They were in many aspects more liberal in their views than their Palestinian brethren. Although not devoid of religious earnestness, and characterised by a more missionary spirit, they were far from being strict in their adherence to the ancient Jewish ritual and practice. Whatever, therefore, may be the value of 2 Maccabees as presenting a duplicate history (though admittedly a confused one) of a portion of the Maccabean

<sup>1</sup> The altar which Isaiah speaks of was an altar of witness like that of Ed (Joshua xxii. 23, 24), and not an altar designed for sacrifices. The pillar Isaiah speaks of was an erection on the frontier of Egypt to indicate that the land of Egypt in the day spoken of was no longer to be regarded as a heathen land, but as part of the heritage of Jehovah. The prophecy of Isaiah was an ideal prophecy which predicted the conversion of the Egyptians in language drawn from the Mosaic economy. That ideal prophecy was first misrepresented as a literal prophecy, and then utilised for the purpose above mentioned by the Jewish schismatics in the land of Egypt.

struggle, that book, unsupported by other evidence, is no sufficient authority to adduce for Palestinian usage. Jason of Cyrene and his Alexandrian epitomiser were probably both of them imbued with Pharisee principles, in opposition to the more decidedly Sadducean spirit exhibited by the author of 1 Maccabees. But 2 Maccabees exhibits occasionally an ignorance of Palestine itself (and sometimes even, which is more strange, of Egypt), for which it is difficult to account. Josephus does not seem to have been acquainted with the Second Book of Maccabees, and his descriptions of the campaigns of the period do not coincide with its narrative, except in cases in which the narrative of 1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees agree together.

It is unnecessary for our special purpose to dwell on the story of the martyrdom recorded in Chapter vii. From an eschatological point of view the speeches of the mother and the martyred brethren deserve attention, for those speeches breathe the spirit of faith in the resurrection of the dead, and even of their consciousness in the Intermediate state (comp. Chap. vi. 23). But they do not describe that Intermediate state,

The  
martyr-  
doms of  
Chap. vii.

c

and they do not allude to any prayers for the dead.

Discrepancies  
between  
1 Macc.  
and  
2 Macc.

It is impossible, within present limits, to enter upon any examination of the historical credibility of the particular campaign which led up to and included that particular action of Judas Maccabeus to which Christian theologians have ascribed such importance. It is hard to reconcile the statements of 2 Macc. Chap. xii., with the narrative of 1 Maccabees. But, with the object at present in view, it is better to argue on the assumption that the narrative of 2 Macc. xii. is founded on fact, than to dispute its historical character, although the facts recorded are unconfirmed by 1 Maccabees or by Josephus.

The battle  
with  
Georgias.

In 2 Macc. xii. a sketch is given of various victories gained by Judas Maccabeus over the Syrian commanders. In the battle with Georgias, the governor (or general) of Idumæa, Judas seems to have been hard pressed, for his soldiers had been fighting hard for a considerable time, and were almost wearied out. The narrator says (verse 36): "Judas called upon the Lord to show himself fighting on their side and leading the van of the battle; and then, in the



language of his fathers, he raised the battle-cry joined with hymns, and, rushing unawares upon the troops of Georgias, put them to flight."

The narrative continues (verse 38): "And Judas, gathering his army, came unto the city of Adullam, and as the seventh day was coming on, they purified themselves according to the custom, and kept the Sabbath there. (39) And on the following day, at which time it had become necessary, Judas and his company came to take up the bodies of them that had fallen, and in company with their kinsmen to bring them back unto the sepulchres of their fathers. (40) But under the garments of each one of the dead they found consecrated tokens of the idols of Jamnia,<sup>1</sup> which the law forbids the Jews

The discovery of idolatrous practices.

<sup>1</sup> Jamnia, or Jabnia, was a Philistine town which, according to 2 Macc. xii. 8, 9, had been stormed by Judas because he had received information that its inhabitants intended to murder the Jews there, as the people of Joppa had done (vers. 3-7). Judas, according to verse 7, seems to have been unsuccessful in his attack on Joppa, which city was taken later by his brother Jonathan (1 Macc. x. 75, 76). An attack of Judas on Jamnia is mentioned in 1 Macc. iv. 16. The narrative of 2 Maccabees is scarcely consistent with fact, for it affirms that Judas at Jamnia set fire to the haven together with the fleet (*ὑφῆψε τὸν λιμένα σὺν τῷ στόλῳ*). Jamnia, however, can scarcely have had a haven, being a considerable distance from the sea. It should be remarked that these incidents are not mentioned by any other historian than the compiler of 2 Maccabees, although resting possibly on some historical substratum.

to have aught to do with; and it became clear to all that it was for this cause they had fallen. (41) And therefore, blessing the works of the Lord, the righteous Judge, who maketh manifest the things that are hid (42), betook themselves unto supplications, beseeching that the sin committed might be wholly blotted out. And the noble Judas exhorted the multitude to keep themselves from sin, forasmuch as they had seen before their eyes what things had come to pass because of the sin of them that had fallen. (43) And when he had made a collection, man by man (*κατ' ἀνδρολογίαν*), to the sum of two thousand drachmas of silver, he sent unto Jerusalem to offer a sacrifice for sin,<sup>1</sup> doing therein right well and honourably, in that he took thought for a resurrection.<sup>2</sup> (44) For if

The collection "man by man."

The sin-offering.

<sup>1</sup> The Greek is *προσαγαγεῖν περὶ ἁμαρτίας θυσίαν*. The Vulgate erroneously translates: "misit Jerosolymam offerri pro peccatis mortuorum sacrificium" ("sent to Jerusalem for sacrifices to be offered for the sins of the dead"—Douay Version), although it may be conceded that, from a Roman Catholic standpoint, that may be a natural *interpretation* to put on the phrase. It assumes, however, the very question in dispute. See remarks above.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek is *ὑπὲρ ἀναστάσεως διαλογιζόμενος*; hence the Revised Version is more correct in omitting the article. It is an interesting question whether Judas Maccabeus may not have had some idea that a resurrection would occur in his own day. He may have based this idea on the language of Dan. xii. 2, clearly connected as it is with the

he were not expecting that they that had fallen would rise again, it were superfluous and idle to pray<sup>1</sup> for the dead. (45) (And if *he did it*, looking unto an honourable memorial of gratitude laid up for them that die in godliness,<sup>2</sup> holy and godly was the thought.) Wherefore he made the propitiation for them that had died, that they might be released from their sin.”<sup>3</sup>

Such is the celebrated passage according to the Revised Version. The importance attached to the passage by Christians, even in comparatively early times,<sup>4</sup> and the attempts to add something by way of “improvement” to its text, may be

The  
Maccabees  
not rigid  
Jews.

prophecy that precedes the Maccabean age in Dan. xi. However, that subject is too difficult to be discussed in a footnote.

<sup>1</sup> The Syrian Version reads: “To pray and to offer sacrifices for the dead.”

<sup>2</sup> The Syrian Version adds here: “And a reward and hope and rest prepared for them.”

<sup>3</sup> The Latin Vulgate reads the two concluding verses somewhat differently (verse 45): “And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness had great grace laid up for them. (46) It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins” (Douay Version).

<sup>4</sup> Strange it is to have to note that the Jews never, until very recent days, referred to this incident in the story of Judas Maccabeus. The Christian expositors have given an importance to this passage which was never put upon it by the Jews. If the latter practised prayers for the dead, they did not base their practice on supposed Maccabean precedents. M. Israel Levi has also commented on this fact in his remarkable article noticed on pp. 40, 146, 148.

seen from the interpolations and interpretations which are set forth in our footnotes. The reader ought carefully to distinguish between the facts recorded by the writer of 2 Maccabees and the reflections which the writer has thought fit to make thereon. It must be borne in mind that the Maccabees were far from rigidly adhering to the teachings of the Law and the Prophets. It may be questioned whether they had any real claim to the high priesthood, and at least their combination of the priestly and the kingly dignities, resorted to from political reasons, was a violation of the Law, and gave just offence to the pious Israelites of their own day. Hence the later Pharisees who inherited the views of "the Assideans," sometimes scornfully alluded to by the author of 1 Maccabees (who seems personally to have been more disposed to favour the principles of the Sadducean party), did not look with favour upon the Maccabean heroes. The Talmud and other Jewish writings rarely allude to the great Maccabean chieftains, and when they do, commend chiefly Mattathias, their father.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the able paper of Dr. M. Gaster on "The Scroll of the Hasmonæans," in the "Transactions of the Ninth International Congress

Judas Maccabeus looked upon the death of his soldiers who fell in the battle as a judgment inflicted by Divine Providence on account of the sins they committed in carrying upon their persons small images of the Philistine gods, or of wearing idolatrous emblems or charms. The army of Israel itself had been defiled by that compliance with idolatrous practices. Hence Judas had good cause to fear that some judgment would follow like that inflicted in earlier days upon the soldiers of Israel (Josh. vii.). Fearing, therefore, such a catastrophe, Judas made at once a collection from each man (κατ' ἀνδρολογίαν) and sent the money contributed to Jerusalem that the priests in the temple might offer a sin-offering on behalf of the army. That is the most natural interpretation of the facts recorded. But if it be maintained that the sin-offering in question was intended to be an atonement for the dead, such a sin-offering was offered without any authority derived from the Law of Moses, and was a novelty introduced for

Judas and  
his sin-  
offering.

of Orientalists," 1892. But this in part must be modified by the facts given in "An Aramaic Text of the Scroll of Antiochus," by I. Abrahams, in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, January 1899, and more light is still to be looked for on this curious apocryphon.

that special occasion. The compiler of 2 Maccabees, whether correctly or incorrectly, seems to have taken the latter view, which would account for his anxiety to justify the act, a justification based on the broadest and most general grounds.<sup>1</sup>

Reason of  
the collec-  
tion.

There could have been, however, no occasion whatever for making such a collection "man by man" (compare Josh. vii. 17), had not each man

<sup>1</sup> Professor Israel Levi, who takes exactly the same view as that already explained, has well observed in his article (spoken of more fully in Chap. iv. pp. 146, 148): "The commentary of the narrator only shows the ideas of a Jew of Alexandria or of Cyrene, but it does not at all represent those of the Palestinians, and it would be singularly daring, on the faith of such testimony, to reconstruct the ritual of the Temple at Jerusalem. For a long time after, the priestly codes preserved in the Mishna ignore the existence of such sacrifices; the Rabbis were quite ignorant of them. And the Pharisees, who held the doctrine of the resurrection, would have rejoiced in the weapon which the institution of such sacrifices, if they had that significance, would have furnished them with in order to triumph over the Sadducees. How could the priests of that sect be able to reply to an argument drawn from a rite observed in the Temple? If their adversaries had neglected that weapon, it is assuredly because there never was offered upon the altar of Jerusalem sacrifices intended for the benefit of the dead. Is it possible to say that the Book of the Maccabees, imported into Palestine, has enough prestige to implant a new funereal rite? The supposition is not to be thought of for a moment."—"La Commemoration des Ames dans le Judaïsme," in the *Revue des Études Juives*, No. 57, 1894.

Dr. Luckock, in his additional remarks (p. 64) on the passage in 2 Maccabees, writes as if the explanation given above of the passage in that book was a mere novelty in place of being the exposition put forth by the most eminent critics. See "After Death," New Edition, 1898.

in the army been regarded as more or less contaminated by the sin of his deceased fellow-soldiers.

Moreover, if it could be shown by the clearest evidence that the sin-offering which Judas is said to have offered on that occasion was designed to be a sacrifice on behalf of the souls of those who perished on the battle-field, that conclusion would not settle the question. For such an offering would have been offered without the slightest authority derived from Holy Writ. That act, like the unholy combination of the priestly and royal dignities, could only be regarded as an additional novelty introduced by Judas Maccabeus, for some reason or other, of which no account whatever is afforded in the narrative.

Was this  
sin-offering  
a  
novelty?

An attentive reader of the passage cannot fail to have observed how confused is the whole narrative of the closing verses. Apart from all consideration of the interpolations and various readings noted in our footnotes, the writer, if the text of 2 Maccabees be correct, exhibits no little inconsistency. For he first states distinctly that the men who had perished on the field were

Incon-  
sistency of  
compiler.

slain because of their idolatrous practices, and yet afterwards speaks of the same soldiers as men who had died in godliness.<sup>1</sup>

No trace of  
purgatory.

There is not, as Grimm has long ago pointed out, the slightest trace of any purgatory (like that of which the Romish Church dreams) discoverable in the Jewish teachings of the Maccabean era. It is barely possible that the writer of 2 Maccabees may have imagined that, by means of a sin-offering, Judas might have been able to rescue from the flames of Gehenna the transgressors who have died fighting for their country, although he did not dare to conceal the fact that those "sinners against their own souls" bore on their own persons the proofs of their sad compliance with idolatry. But if such were the views held by Judas, his views were radically different from the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. (See Chap. V.) For according to the tenets of the Church of Rome, sinners dying in mortal sin (and idolatry is distinctly

<sup>1</sup> Professor Rawlinson, in the *Speaker's Commentary*, appears to account for this apparent inconsistency by supposing that the transgressors who had been slain on account of their transgression were regarded as having become godly by the sin-offering. But such an interpretation is most strained,



admitted to be such) descend to Gehenna, that is, to the hell of the lost, and have no chance of redemption.

On whatever light, therefore, the passage in 2 Macc. xii. may be viewed, it is very far from affording any satisfactory proof of the practice of prayers for the dead among the Jews of the Maccabean period. The history of the episode is, in the first place, of doubtful credibility. And even if the narrative be accepted as historical, the reflections of the writer upon the incidents recorded are confused and unsatisfactory. Moreover, the testimony of an Egyptian Jew as to the practice of the Jews in Palestine cannot be relied on in any matter in which that testimony runs counter to all other evidence respecting the beliefs of the Jewish nation.

No satisfactory proof of prayer for the dead.

#### § 4. *The Third and Fourth Books of the Maccabees*

1. The Third Book of the Maccabees is not found in the Latin Vulgate, and was generally unknown in the West until the sixteenth century, when its Greek text was published in the Com-

plutensian Polyglot (1514-17). The Greek is contained in Tischendorf's and in Swete's editions of the Septuagint. The book does not record events of the Maccabean struggle, but professes to give an account of the attempt of Ptolemy Philopator (221-204 B.C.) to destroy the Jewish nation, because of their determination to stand by the religion of their forefathers. The work is probably imperfect. Scholars are yet undecided whether it is wholly legendary or based on some facts of history. It has been translated into English by Churton and others. The date of the work is unknown, though it may be safely affirmed that it was written before A.D. 70.

Gates of  
Hades.

There is no mention in the book of the Intermediate state, but in two passages Hades (the Unseen) is mentioned, namely, in Chap. v. 42 and Chap. v. 51. The latter is interesting, because "the gates of Hades," there mentioned, distinctly mean "the gates of the grave." See remarks on pp. 291 ff.

Fourth  
Book of  
Maccabees.

2. The Fourth Book of Maccabees, written in praise of Jewish martyrs, and often termed "The Triumph of Reason," though admittedly apocryphal, is of peculiar interest. The Greek

text is to be found in the standard editions of the Septuagint mentioned in the former paragraph. The date of the book may have been some fifty years before Christ, and cannot be put later than A.D. 70. It was probably written in Alexandria. It has been translated into English by Churton and others.

Its statements as to the state of souls after death are few, but important. In Chap. vii. 17 we read that those who regard religion "are they who believe that to God they do not die, for, as our patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they live to God." The same sentiment is expressed in Chap. xvi. 22, and illustrates strikingly the Lord's argument by which He put the Sadducees to silence (Matt. xxii. 31, 32; Mark xii. 26, 27; Luke xx. 37, 38). The martyrs described in the book are spoken of as having anticipated joyfully being with their brethren in the world beyond the grave, and as believing that in that world they would be able to bring a great avenger upon their persecutors (Chap. xi. 19). They knew well that there were punishments allotted for the ungodly: "Let us not fear him who seems to kill, for a great trial and a danger to the soul is laid up in eternal

The right-  
eous dead  
live unto  
God.

The seven  
martyrs  
and their  
mother.

torment (*ἐν αἰωνίῳ βασάνῳ*) for those who trespass the commandments of God" (Chap. xiii. 14). Comp. Matt. xxii. 32; Luke xx. 38. The seven martyrs and their mother therefore are described as running in the way of immortality (*ἐπ' ἀθανασίας ὁδόν*), moved by the immortal soul of piety (*ὑπὸ ψυχῆς ἀθανάτου τῆς εὐσεβείας*), Chap. xiv. 3, 4, and they are finally described as those who "now stand before the throne of God, and are living through a blessed eternity" (Chap. xvii. 17). For those martyrs, "the children of Abraham with their victorious mother, are assembled together to the company of their fathers, having received from God pure and immortal souls" (Chap. xviii. 23).

The same martyrdoms are recorded in 2 Maccabees vii., where language very similar is made use of. The two narratives are in many respects closely similar.

No prayers  
for the  
dead.

The Fourth Book of Maccabees shows the same Jewish teaching with regard to the intermediate state and the glory of the righteous in it. Not a hint is dropped anywhere that those who have passed beyond the grave could be benefited by prayers offered up by those left behind in life.

## CHAPTER III

### THE STATE OF THE DEAD DEPICTED IN OTHER APOCRYPHAL WORKS

#### § 1. The Books of Tobit, Judith, and Baruch

1. The date of the Book of Tobit is uncertain, but it is probable that the work was composed about a century (possibly even two centuries) prior to the Christian era. The book is extant in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Aramaic. It is not certain whether it was originally written in Greek or Aramaic, and it is equally uncertain whether the book was written in Palestine or not.

Its angelology and demonology have invested the book with special interest, and the writer seems to approve to some extent of the employment of magical arts. Hades is mentioned twice in the book, in Chap. iii. 10, where it is used in the sense of the grave; in Chap. xiii. 2, where it is said God "leadeth down to the grave and leadeth up." In Chap. iv. 19, in the Sinaitic

Hades in  
Book of  
Tobit.

MS., we read, "Whom the Lord will he humbleth even to the lowest parts of Hades."

Tobit gives directions about his body, but says nothing of prayers for his soul.

In Chap. iv. the dying Tobit is represented as directing his son Tobias what to do after his death. Tobit gave Tobias minute directions concerning the burial of his body, but did not say a word respecting the duty of offering up prayers for his soul after death. This evidence is no doubt purely negative, but although negative, is of some importance in face of the assertions often made that the Jews used to pray for the dead prior to the Christian era.

Book of Judith.

2. The Book of Judith is supposed by some to have been composed about 135 B.C., but by other scholars assigned to 50 B.C. Although most probably originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic, the work has only come down to us in a Greek translation. From an historical point of view the narrative presents great difficulties, and some scholars have maintained that the work is to some degree of an allegorical character, though very possibly an allegory partially founded on fact.

The punishment of the ungodly.

The Book of Judith contains only one passage of an eschatological character, namely, that at the conclusion of Judith's song of thanksgiving

(Chap. xvi. 17), which speaks of the punishment of the ungodly in the final day of judgment. The passage affords no support to prayers for the dead.

The passage in Judith is founded upon Isaiah lxvi. 24, but it goes much further than the statement in Isaiah. It may be well to quote it here, although it does not bear directly on prayers for the dead.

The fire  
and worm.

“Woe to the nations that rise up against my race ;  
The Lord Almighty will take vengeance of them in the  
day of judgment,  
To put fire and worms in their flesh ;  
And they shall weep and feel their pain for ever.”

Compare the reference in Ecclesiasticus vii. 17, noticed on pp. 17, 18.

3. The Book of Baruch (considered apart from the Epistle of Jeremy at its close, which is an independent book) comprises two distinct works. The first portion comprehends Chap. i. to Chap. iii. 8 ; the second, Chap. iii. 9 to Chap. v. 9. The former may be earlier than the Christian era, the second part was certainly not written till nearly a century after Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Book of  
Baruch.

<sup>1</sup> There was once a considerable literature in existence which bore the name of Baruch. Of that literature the Apocryphal Baruch (which

The supposed prediction about Christ.

The fine passage at Chap. iii. 9–27 was often quoted by the Church fathers, and regarded by them as a prophecy of Christ.

Prayer of Baruch.

In Baruch iii. 4, the following prayer occurs: “O Lord God Almighty, Thou God of Israel, hear now the prayer of the dead Israelites, and of the children of them which were sinners before Thee, that hearkened not unto the voice of Thee, their God.”

The Intercession alluded to.

Some commentators (as Castellio, Grotius) have sought to explain these words of the Israelites in exile who were figuratively dead<sup>1</sup> (*comp.* Ezek. xxxvii.). The passage seems, however, to refer to the prayers of the pious Israelites in days of old, who, like Moses (Deut. xxx. 1–3;

forms part of the Septuagint Scriptures) is generally regarded to be the oldest relic. Scholars are, however, far from unanimous on the point. Ewald, with others, considers that the first portion of the book, of which the original was probably Hebrew or Aramaic, may have been written three centuries before Christ. Fritzsche (*Exeg. Handb. zu den Apocryphen*) assigns it to the Maccabean period. Kneucker (*Das Buch Baruch, Geschichte u. Kritik*, &c., Leipzig, 1879) and Schürer (*Gesch. des jüdisch. Volkes*) consider it clearly proved to have been written after A.D. 70. The second part of the book, the original of which portion seems to have been Greek, was most probably written in the latest years of the first century. For a notice of other works under the name of Baruch, see notes on pp. 80, 81.

<sup>1</sup> If, however, that had been the meaning of the writer, as Fritzsche has observed, the Greek would rather have been *θνήσκοντες*; but the Greek used in the passage is *τῶν τεθνηκότων Ἰσραήλ*.



xxxii. 36-43), anticipated the coming of the national calamities alluded to, and also Solomon, who in his great prayer (1 Kings viii. 25-53), interceded in anticipation for Israel.<sup>1</sup> There would be little strange in the idea of the writer's having expressed a belief that in the Unseen world the departed pious continue to lift up their prayers for the "remnant of Israel." That notion is not to be identified with the invocation of saints taught in some professedly Christian Churches.

The references elsewhere made in the Book of Baruch (assuming for argument's sake its unity), however, negative such an interpretation, for the earlier portion contains the expression: "Open, Lord, Thine eyes and behold; for the dead in Hades (οἱ τεθνηκότες ἐν τῷ ᾗδῃ), whose breath is taken from their bodies, will give unto the Lord neither glory nor righteousness" (Chap. ii. 17). In Chap. iii. 19, where the writer speaks of those who trusted in their wealth, it is said:

Hades in  
Baruch.

<sup>1</sup> Hitzig has ingeniously suggested that the Greek translator may have incorrectly read the original Hebrew, מְתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, *the dead of Israel* in place of מְתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, *men of Israel* (Isa. xli. 14). The matter is discussed at large in Kneucker in his *Buch Baruch, Geschichte u. Kritik, Uebersetzung und Erklärung*, Leipzig, 1879.

“They are vanished, and gone down to Hades (the Unseen, εἰς ἄδου), and others are come in their stead.”

No prayers  
for the  
dead.

These are the only references to the Unseen world in the Book of Baruch. They exhibit no traces of a belief in “the Unseen” or Intermediate state as a place of development, education, or purification, nor do they imply the practice of prayers for the dead.

## § 2. The Book of Enoch

The com-  
position of  
the Book  
of Enoch.

The Book of Enoch is made up of a number of fragments of books of different character and age, which formed part of a considerable apocryphal literature. Many of the early Fathers looked upon the strange medley known as the Book of Enoch as almost an inspired production, and derived not a few of their curious opinions directly from that source. In its present form the book goes back to the first, or possibly even to the second, century before Christ. A passage found in the Book of Enoch occurs in St. Jude’s Epistle (vers. 14, 15), and references are made to the book in the

Apocalypse of Baruch, now generally thought to belong to the first century after Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Taking the work as arranged in the order of chapters, it falls naturally into six parts or sections. Section I. comprises Chapters i.–xxxvi., written, as Charles thinks, not later than 170 B.C. Section II. consists of *The Similitudes*, and extends from Chapters xxxvii.–lxxi. The date assigned to this portion, in general, is between 94 and 79 B.C., or 70–64 B.C. Section III. consists of Chapters lxxii.–lxxxii. This is the *Book of Celestial Physics*. Its date cannot be ascertained. Section IV., the *Dream-Visions*, includes Chapters lxxxiii.–xc., written between

Its various portions.

<sup>1</sup> The Book of Enoch was long supposed to have been hopelessly lost, but the Ethiopic version was discovered by Bruce in Abyssinia, in 1773. The Ethiopic text was first published by Archbishop Lawrence in 1821, and more correctly afterwards by Professor A. Dillmann. That scholar edited the Ethiopic text in 1851, and published a German translation of the work, with a valuable commentary, in 1853. Fragments of a Greek translation were discovered in Egypt in 1886–7, and edited by M. Bouriant, in the *Mémoires publiés par le membres de la Mission Archéologique Française au Caire, tom. ix. fasc. 1*, 1892, and in December of the same year by Dillmann, in *Sitzungsberichte der K. Preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, li. liii. The Rev. R. H. Charles, M.A., published a year later (1893) his classical work, "The Book of Enoch, translated from Professor Dillmann's Ethiopic Text; emended and revised in accordance with hitherto uncollated Ethiopic MSS., and with the Gizeh and other Greek and Latin Fragments, which are here published in full. Edited, with Introduction, Notes, &c." (Oxford: Clarendon Press.) The literature on the "Book of Enoch" is given in full in Prof. Charles's work.

94-79 B.C. or 70-64 B.C. Section V. embraces Chapters xci.-civ. or cviii. This portion seems to have been written between 134 or 94 B.C., or possibly 104-94 B.C. There are divers interpolations, which can easily be detected, throughout the book, the majority of which seem to belong to the lost *Apocalypse of Noah*. These interpolations need not be specified for our present purpose, but are mentioned in Prof. Charles's work, p. 25.

Its im-  
portance.

The Book of Enoch is of considerable importance in any investigation of Jewish opinion in regard to Hades, or the state of the dead. From first to last, however, no mention of prayers for the dead is made in any part of the book, although it might well have been expected that reference would have been made to such a practice, if in existence at the time of the writer, or writers, of this strange compilation.

(a.) *Enoch, Section I., 170 B.C.*

The  
heavenly  
watchers.

In Section I. angels are frequently referred to as the heavenly and eternal "watchers" over men. (Compare Dan. iv. 13, 17, 23.) That peculiar term, "watchers," is applied both to

the holy angels and to the fallen angels. The leader of the angels, who fell into sin, is named Azazel (mentioned Lev. xvi. 8, 10; see the Revised Version and the margin of Authorised Version). He is represented as having revealed certain secrets to the children of men, which were intended to have been kept concealed from their knowledge.

A description is given of the place of punishment for the fallen angels who defiled themselves with women. That is the interpretation the Book of Enoch places upon the narrative in Genesis vi. The place of punishment is termed Tartarus, and the women who led the angels astray are represented as punished with them in the same place. In Chapter xxii. "the spirits of the souls of the dead" are further represented as assembled in "hollow places." Those places in Hades are stated to have been "created to this very end, that all the souls of the children of men should assemble there." The righteous dead, like Abel, are pictured therein constantly complaining of their oppressors on earth. (Comp. Rev. vi. See Chap. vi. § 7.) The souls of the dead are divided from one another in three divisions,

Punishment in the Intermediate state.

Divisions  
between  
the right-  
eous and  
wicked.

“The souls of the righteous are thus separated (from the rest): there is a spring of water and light above it [that division]. Such a division, likewise, has been made for sinners when they die and are buried in the earth without incurring judgment in their lifetime. Here their souls are placed apart in this great pain, till the great day of judgment and punishment and torture of the revilers for ever, and vengeance for their souls; there they will be bound for ever. And such a division has been made for the souls of those (sinners) who complain, and make known their destruction when they were slain in the days of the sinners. Thus it has been made for the souls of men who were not righteous, but sinners, complete in their crimes: they will not be with criminals like themselves; but their souls will not be slain on the day of judgment, nor will they be raised from thence” (Chap. xxii. 9-13).

Professor Charles remarks on the last verse, “The sinners in the third division will rise in order to be delivered over to a severer condemnation. The resurrection here implied is of Israel only: so the entire Section i.-xxxvi.

would lead us to infer. Otherwise this declaration of a general resurrection is solitary and unique in pre-Christian Jewish Apocrypha."

It is unnecessary here to comment on the view of the Intermediate state and its divisions given in this first part of Enoch. It is clear that the writer had no idea either of prayers for the dead on the one hand, or of Hades being a place of education for departed souls on the other.

No prayers  
for dead.

(b.) *Enoch, Similitudes*, 94-64 B.C.

Section II. of the book, termed *The Similitudes*, abounds with descriptions of the day of judgment. The angelology and demonology of this section possess peculiar interest. There is considerable similarity in the phraseology employed by the Book of Enoch when it speaks of such matters and that phraseology used by our Lord and the Apostles. The similarity is best explained as arising from the fact that such phrases were in common use among the Jews of the later period. The Jews of the first century probably derived many of their common expressions concerning the future state from the Book of Enoch.

Angel-  
ology and  
demon-  
ology.

The garden of Paradise.

The Intermediate state is only incidentally referred to in this second section of Enoch. But "the garden where the elect and righteous dwell" is there mentioned (Chap. lx. 8). It is also called "the garden of life" (Chap. lxi. 12), although the statements made as to the locality of the garden differ considerably.

Sheol, or the Under-world.

Sheol, or the Under-world, is spoken of as follows (Chap. li. 1, 2): "In those days will the earth also give back those who are treasured up within it, and Sheol will also give back that which it has received, and hell (lit. *destruction*, comp. Job xxvi. 6) will give back that which it owes." Again, in Chapter lvi. 8, when speaking of the day of judgment, it is said, "And in those days Sheol will open its jaws, and they [the enemies mentioned previously] will be swallowed up therein, and their destruction will be at an end; Sheol will devour the sinners in the presence of the elect." In Chapter lxiii. 10 the mighty and the kings, after imploring in vain for mercy, exclaim: "Our souls are satisfied with the mammon of unrighteousness, but this does not prevent us from descending into the place of the pain of Sheol." In this book the righteous only



are spoken of as raised at the resurrection. Hence Sheol at last is transformed into Gehenna. Comp. Rev. xx. 14.

(c.) *Enoch, Dream-Visions*, 94-64 B.C.

Section III. has nothing which bears upon our subject. Nor has Section IV., *The Dream-Visions*, which under allegorical emblems presents us with a history of man from the time of the apostates spoken of in Gen. vi. on to the day of judgment. That history in its latter part is mainly concerned with Israel. In the day of judgment it is said that "an abyss is opened in the midst of the earth full of fire," in which the wicked are cast and burned, while a New Jerusalem will be created (Chap. xc. 26-30). The abyss  
of fire.

(d.) *Enoch, Section V.*, 134-94 B.C.

Section V. has, however, several points closely connected with our subject. It depicts several scenes of judgment, and in these Sheol is occasionally spoken of. Thus in Chapter xcix. 11 we read, "Woe to you who hope for misfortune to your neighbour, for you will be slain in Sheol." Other passages will be afterwards mentioned. Judgments  
in Sheol.

The most important passage on the Intermediate state in this section is that in Chapter c. 5, "And over the righteous and holy He (the Most High) will appoint as guardians holy angels to guard them as the apple of an eye until He has made an end of all wicked men and all sin, and though the righteous sleep a long sleep, they have nought to fear." The writer, therefore, seems here to regard the Intermediate state as a state of sleep, out of which the righteous are to be awakened at the resurrection.

Sleep in  
Inter-  
mediate  
state.

In a later portion (Chap. cii. 5) he writes: "Fear ye not, ye souls of the righteous, and be hopeful, ye that die in righteousness. And grieve not if your body descends in grief into Sheol [Sheol is here used as a synonym for the grave], and that in your life your body has not fared as your goodness deserved, but truly as on a day on which ye became like the sinners, and on a day of cursing and chastisement." For the wicked are represented as saying of the righteous, "Nevertheless they perished, and became as though they had not been, and their souls descended into Sheol in tribulation" (Chap. cii. 11). The righteous are, however, assured of a blessed future: "Your

Sheol and  
souls of  
righteous.

spirits [the spirits] of you who die in righteousness will live and rejoice and be glad, and their spirits will not perish, but their memorial will be before the face of the Great One unto all the generations of the world" (Chap. ciii. 4).

Of the wicked, on the contrary, it is said: "Know ye that their souls will be made to descend into Sheol, and they will become wretched, and great will be their tribulation. And into darkness and chains (lit. *a net*), and a burning fire, where there is grievous condemnation, will your spirits enter" (Chap. ciii. 7).

Of the wicked it is also said: "Their names will be blotted out of the book of life and out of the book of the holy ones, and their seed will be destroyed for ever (Chap. ciii. 3-7), and their spirits will be slain, and they will cry and make lamentation in a place that is a waste wilderness, and they will burn with fire where is no earth. And I saw there something like a viewless cloud; for by reason of its depth I could not look thereon, and I saw a flame of fire burning brightly, and there circled (these things) like shining mountains, and they swept to and fro. And I asked one of the holy angels who was with

The  
wicked  
in Sheol.

The place  
of fire and  
pain.

me, and said, 'What is this shining thing? for it is not heaven, but only the flame of a burning fire, and the voice of crying and weeping, and lamentation and strong pain.' And he said unto me, 'This place which thou seest, here are cast the spirits of sinners and blasphemers and of those who work wickedness, and of those who pervert everything that God does through the mouth of the prophets, even the things that shall be,' &c."

No prayer  
for the  
departed.

These extracts from the Book of Enoch suffice to show that the Jewish writers of the various periods to which the various disjointed sections of the present book belong, did not dream of any change in character taking place after death in the case of the unrighteous, or of any prayers being offered up for departed souls, whether of the godly or ungodly.

### § 3. The Second or Fourth Book of Esdras

Second or  
Fourth  
Esdras.

This book, styled in the English Apocrypha Second Esdras, is known in the old Latin and English editions as the Fourth Book of Esdras. The book is a composite work, partly a product

of the first century after Christ, but probably based to a large extent upon writings of a more ancient date. Chapters i. and ii., with Chapters xv. and xvi., are of a much later period.<sup>1</sup>

Kabisch<sup>2</sup> considers the book to be compounded of five distinct writings. The two earlier of these, written prior to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, he names "the Ezra Apocalypse" and "the Son of Man Vision." A portion, in-  
Its divisions.

<sup>1</sup> In the Latin Vulgate the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah respectively are termed First and Second Esdras. These books were included in the Hebrew canon. But the books in "the Apocrypha," translated in the Authorised and Revised English Versions, and there termed First and Second Esdras, were regarded as uncanonical by the Council of Trent. The former of the latter two books, known as Third Esdras, is to a large extent a compilation, which gives a history of the Return from the Captivity at Babylon, compiled chiefly from 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. That apocryphal work forms part of the Septuagint Version, and is in the LXX. termed First Esdras. The book known as Second Esdras in the Septuagint is a translation of the Hebrew Ezra, the book of Nehemiah being called in the Septuagint by its proper name. The second of the two before-named apocryphal works is termed variously Second Esdras and Fourth Esdras. Those two works are in the Latin Vulgate placed at the end of the books of the New Testament, lest they should altogether perish, which was regarded as undesirable, because the books are quoted by some of the Fathers. In the Douay Version (the English accredited Roman Catholic translation of the Vulgate) those books are not given. The apocryphal Second or Fourth Esdras is by the Greek Church termed "The Apocalypse, or Prophecy of Ezra." It was probably originally written in Greek, but as a whole is extant only in translations, of which the oldest and best-preserved form is the Latin.

<sup>2</sup> See R. Kabisch, *Das vierte Buch Esra auf seine Quellen untersucht*, Gottingen, 1889.

cluding the vision of the three-headed Eagle with twelve wings (Chap. x. 60–xii. 35), which fascinated the imagination of Edward Irving, is much later. Another portion of the book, which shall presently be noticed, is termed by Kabisch “the Apocalypse of Salathiel.” Professor Charles in his “Eschatology” “provisionally” accepts that arrangement. We have noticed it in our remarks, but for our present purpose may treat the compilation as one book.

The middle, or main portion of the work, consists of seven visions said to have been beheld by Ezra in Babylon, which are modelled to a considerable extent upon the visions of the Book of Daniel. There are phrases and portions which contain language very similar to the Book of the Revelation.

The long-  
lost pas-  
sage.

The importance of the book in connection with the special purpose we have in view is that it contains a long passage which speaks of the state of departed souls, in which language is made use of which is inconsistent with the notion of prayers for the dead. This particular portion is to be found in Chapter vii.<sup>1</sup> The passage was

<sup>1</sup> Sixty-nine verses which belonged to Chapter vii., and ought to have come in between verses 35 and 36, are omitted in the old Latin editions,

so unacceptable to the opinions of the monks of the Western Church, that it appears to have been deliberately cut out of the Latin MS. from whence the majority of the Latin MSS. in the libraries of Europe were copied.

This latter fact has been placed beyond doubt by the researches of Professor Bensly and others. The passage was cut out of the "Codex Sangermanensis," now in the National Library of Paris.

Cut out of  
a codex.

and in the versions made from its text. They are therefore not included in the Authorised Version of the apocryphal books. These sixty-nine additional verses were discovered by Professor Bensly of Cambridge, in a ninth-century Latin manuscript at Amiens. His find was set forth in the "Missing Fragment of the Latin Translation of the Fourth Book of Ezra," discovered and edited with an Introduction and Notes, Cambridge University Press, 1875. Still later (unfortunately after the death of that eminent scholar) in the Cambridge Texts and Studies, was published "The Fourth Book of Ezra: the Latin Version edited from the MSS. of the late Robert L. Bensly, M.A.," Lord Almoner's Professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge, with an Introduction by Montague Rhodes James, Litt.D., Fellow and Dean of King's College, Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 1895. The additional verses are translated in Mr. Churton's "Uncanonical and Apocryphal Scriptures," London, 1884, and are included in their proper place in the Revised Version of the Apocrypha issued in 1895. The missing verses in Chapter vii. are found also in the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Armenian versions.

The so-called Fifth Book of Ezra is really only a portion of Fourth Ezra. It contains Chapters i. and ii. with Chapters xv. and xvi. Those chapters are found in no version except the Latin. They are unquestionably of later date than the other portions of the book. But Fourth Ezra in many portions affords proof of its having been made up of fragments of different works. For it is a combination of several other works, and is in that respect like the Book of Enoch.

E

Some five unmutilated MSS. have been discovered since 1875 by Professor Bensly, Professor S. Berger, and others. Those MSS. are described in Dr. M. R. James's Introduction, in the work mentioned below.

Book well  
known in  
first cen-  
tury.

The Fourth Book of Ezra is quoted in the Epistle of Barnabas (Chap. xii. 2) as a genuinely prophetic work (λέγει Κύριος). The work was, therefore, well known in the first century after Christ. Clement of Alexandria refers to it (*Stromata*, ii. 16). Traces of the work have also been pointed out in the writings of Hermas. The Revelation of St. John reflects its phraseology and symbols (see Charles's "Eschatology," p. 351), though it does not necessarily follow that the apocryphal book was used by St. John. Even figures and expressions used by our Lord are to be found in it. The book, however, appears to have been originally the work of a Jew, or at least to have been based upon some specifically Jewish and non-Christian literature. Greek seems to have been its original language. Its views of the Messiah are strange and confusing. Thus the "Ezra Apocalypse" portion speaks of a time of rejoicing with Jesus for four hundred years. "And



after those years shall my Son Christ die, and all that have the breath of man (*hominis*).<sup>1</sup> And the world shall be turned into the old silence seven days like as in the first beginning: so that no man shall remain, and after seven days the world that yet awaketh not, shall be raised up, and that shall die that is corruptible" (Chap. vii. 28-31). These phenomena make it probable that the book contains considerable interpolations.<sup>2</sup> It is inconsistent with itself. It is impossible to separate the Christian from the non-Christian elements, or to harmonise such passages as that given above with the description of the Messiah in the vision of the twelfth chapter, where, however, though called "the Son of God," Messiah is not represented as really Divine. That portion forms part of what is entitled by Kabisch "the Son of Man Vision."

Christian  
and non-  
Christian  
elements.

The book is, however, peculiarly interesting in many aspects, and deserves more attention than has been usually bestowed upon it. The ac-

<sup>1</sup> Fritzsche reads *homines*, which then would be construed with the preceding all, but *hominis* appears to be the correct reading. The Revised Version translates "the breath of life," but places in the margin: "Lat. *Men*."

<sup>2</sup> Professor Charles has some important remarks on its teaching in his "Eschatology," p. 283 ff.

The  
narrow  
valley.

count of the narrow passage leading to the city of immortality, with a fire on the right hand and deep water on the left, a passage so narrow that but one man could go along there at once (Chap. vii. 6-8) probably suggested to Bunyan his vivid description of the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The Puritan allegorist took care, however, in his description to correct the fanciful ideas of the apocryphal book by adding passages directly derived from the Psalms.

Paradise.

Though the writer of Fourth Esdras was fully aware of the serious difficulties connected with his ideas of the life after death, and the final judgment, he affirms and argues at considerable length that "there be many created, but few saved" (Chap. viii. 3, *comp.* Luke xiii. 23). The day of judgment is represented as lasting a week of years (Chap. vii. 43), but the Messiah is not depicted as acting in that day as the judge of man. "The paradise of delight" for the righteous is described as manifested in the day of judgment, along with "the pit of torment" and the "furnace of Gehenna," prepared for the wicked (Chap. vii. 36). The expression "paradise" is also employed in the book to denote the Garden of

Eden (Chap. vi. 2). It is never used in the Apocrypha of any place of training, or school for the righteous, in Hades. The notion of associating that idea with Paradise has no foothold in any Jewish, or partly Jewish, work of antiquity. The book affirms that no intercessory prayers in the day of judgment will deliver any man from his doom (Chap. vii. 102-105). It was, no doubt, the statements in those concluding verses which seemed so objectionable to Romish monks, that led them to destroy the leaves of the MS. which contained such objectionable sentiments. The same teaching, however, is contained in the verses following, which were retained. The verses we refer to are, according to the old numbering, verses 36-45, or when numbered with the verses of "the Missing Fragment" are counted as verses 105-115.

While the righteous are described from the day of judgment onward as "henceforth incorruptible" (Chap. vii. 97), no mention whatever is made in the book of the incorruptibility or immortality of the wicked.

No mention of immortality of wicked.

The state of the souls in the Intermediate state prior to the resurrection is somewhat minutely

Abodes  
of the  
righteous  
guarded.

described in those portions of the book to which Kabisch has given the name of "the Apocalypse of Salathiel," and to which that critic assigns the larger portion of the verses set forth in "the Missing Fragment." The soul after leaving the body is, according to the writer, free for seven days—"that for seven days they may see the things whereof thou hast been told, and afterwards they shall be gathered together in their habitations" (Chap. vii. 101). The places in which the righteous are retained are guarded by angels. In those places the righteous have great quietness, and look forward to the glory that awaits them in the last days (Chap. vii. 95-97). They see with great joy the glory of him who taketh them up (Chap. vii. 91). In their special habitations the righteous are represented as inquiring concerning the future, "How long are we here? When cometh the fruit of the threshing time (or, of the harvest) of our reward?" (Chap. iv. 35). The answer afforded them by the archangel is, "Even when the number is fulfilled of them that are like unto you" (Chap. iv. 36, 37). Compare Rev. vi. 9, 10.

On the other hand, the souls of the ungodly

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“shall not enter into habitations (*inhabitationes*), but shall wander and be in torments forthwith, ever grieving and sad, in seven ways. The first way, because they have despised the law of the Most High. The second way, because they cannot now make a good returning that they may live. The third way, they shall see the reward laid-up for them that have believed the covenants of the Most High. The fourth way, they shall consider the torment laid up for themselves in the last days” (Chap. vii. 80-84).

Misery of  
ungodly.

It is unnecessary to quote further ; for it is clear that the writer of the Fourth Ezra had no idea of prayers being offered up for the dead in the Intermediate state, or of any deliverance being vouchsafed on the other side of the grave for those that die ungodly.

No prayers  
for dead.

The popularity of this strange book in the early centuries after Christ (whatever be the secrets connected with the shape in which it has descended to our days), goes far to disprove any general practice of prayers for the dead in the age during which it was so popular among Jews and Christians.

That prac-  
tice cannot  
have been  
common.

## § 4. The Psalter of Solomon

The  
Psalms of  
the Phari-  
sees.

The collection of Psalms designated by this name consists of nineteen Psalms, probably written originally in Hebrew, but extant only in Greek. The number of Psalms comprised in the collection may have been originally more extensive. The Psalms are distinctly Pharisaic.<sup>1</sup> Their date is still a matter of considerable dispute. Ewald, Grimm, and other critics, assign them to the Maccabean age. Movers, Schürer, followed by Ryle and James, and many others, place them sometime between 70 and 40 B.C., and regard the death of Pompey on the sands of Alexandria to be pointed out in Ps. ii. 30. That view, however, has been combated, and not unsuccessfully,

<sup>1</sup> The literature of the Psalter of Solomon is given in Schürer's work on the History of the Jewish People, and in the Cambridge edition of the Psalter in question, "Psalms of the Pharisees, commonly called the Psalms of Solomon: the text newly revised from the MSS. Edited with Introduction, English Translation, Notes, &c., by Herbert W. Ryle, M.A., Hulsean Professor of Divinity [and now President of Queens' College], Cambridge, and Martyn R. James, Litt.D., Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 1891." It is unnecessary here to refer to German texts, as Ryle and James's edition is in advance of anything yet published on this special book.

by W. Frankenberg,<sup>1</sup> who maintains that these Psalms are Maccabean.

The Psalter of Solomon is in many respects a veritable gem, and is equally interesting, whether it belongs to the earlier or later date. The writer was evidently one of those who looked for the redemption of Israel, and sung before of the coming of the Lord's Christ. The hope of a coming Messiah is specially expressed in Psalms xvii. and xviii. Messiah expected.

The writer's views with regard to the final condition of the righteous will be best understood by quoting some significant passages. He evidently believed in the immortality of the righteous, and seems to have also held something like to the annihilation of the ungodly. He does not enter into any description of the Intermediate state, and the Psalms do not contain the slightest reference to prayers for the dead. The writer's views of the future state.

The doctrine expressed in these Psalms is distinctly that of the Pharisees. The following may

<sup>1</sup> *Die Datierung der Psalmen Salomos.* Ein Beitrag zur jüdischen Geschichte, Giessen, 1896. Frankenberg gives a re-translation of these Psalms into Hebrew at the end of his treatise, which is of considerable importance for scholars.

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Ps. iii. 12. be regarded as typical passages. In Ps. iii. 12, it is said of the sinner that

“While he liveth, he addeth sin to sin.

He falleth ; verily grievous is his fall, and he shall not rise again ; the destruction (*ἀπώλεια*) of the sinner is for ever.

And the Lord shall not have him in remembrance when He visiteth the righteous.

This is the portion of sinners for evermore.

But they that fear the Lord will rise again into life eternal, and their life shall be in the light of the Lord, and it shall fail no more.”

Ps. xiii. 9. In Ps. xiii. 9, after some verses which speak of the chastening (*παιδεία*) of the righteous, the Psalm continues :—

The  
righteous  
and  
wicked.

“For the Lord will spare his saints, and will blot out (*ἐξαλείψει*) their transgressions with his chastening (*ἐν παιδείᾳ*), for the life of the righteous is for ever.

But sinners shall be taken away unto destruction (*εἰς ἀπώλειαν*), and the memorial of them shall no more be found.

But upon the saints is the mercy of the Lord : yea, upon them that fear him is his mercy.”

Again, in Psalm xiv. (a short Psalm of seven verses) there is the following contrast :—

“The saints of the Lord shall live therein for ever : the paradise of the Lord, the trees of life are his saints.



The planting of them [comp. Is. lx. 21] is rooted for ever; they will not be plucked out all the days of the heaven: for the portion and the inheritance of God is Israel.

The sinners and the transgressors are not like them, which were contented with a day while they were partners together in sin: yea, with a short space of corruption in fulfilling their lust.

Therefore is their inheritance Hades and darkness and destruction (*ἀπώλεια*); and they shall not be found in the day of mercy for the righteous.

But the saints of the Lord shall inherit life in gladness."

### § 5. The Books of the Sibyllines

The Books of the Sibyllines demand something more than a passing notice. There are a great number of difficulties connected with those strange writings into which we do not purpose to enter. They contain considerable Jewish interpolations, and not a few Christian. It would lead us too far afield to notice them in anything like detail, or to attempt even approximately to ascertain the date at which the various portions were written. We must content ourselves in quoting them in the order in which they have been classified into books, occasionally indicating roughly the Jewish

The Sibyllines interpolated.

or Christian portions. We quote from Friedlieb's edition, as sufficiently suitable for our purpose, and shall confine our attention to the passages which speak of Hades and of the souls there.

The second  
fragment.

The second fragment of the Sibyl preserved by Theophilus (bishop, A.D. 168), contains a strong denunciation of idolatry as exhibited among the Egyptians, in which "the cup full of vengeance" (*δίκης μεστόν τὸ κύπελλον*), of which the idolaters shall drink, is vividly described. The "blaze of burning fire" (*αἶθομένοιο πυρὸς σέλας*) shall come upon you, ye shall day by day burn for ever (*δι' αἰῶνος*), ashamed of your useless gods; but those who fear the true and ever-flowing (*ἀένναιον*) God shall inherit life, throughout eternity (*τὸν αἰῶνος χρόνον*) "dwelling in Paradise" (*οἰκοῦντες παραδείσου*).

This passage is no doubt of Jewish origin, and exhibits the current Jewish belief in eternal punishment on the one hand, and in the glories of Paradise on the other.

Hades and  
Tartarus.

In Book i. line 80 ff., Hades is spoken of as the abode of men after death since the sin of Adam, while in lines 100-104 we read of the horrible Tartarean abode (*ταρτάριον δόμον αἰνόν*),

where the ungodly are bound with chains which cannot be broken in the "Gehenna of devouring furious fire, inexhaustible" (*εἰς γέενναν μαλεροῦ λάβρου πυρὸς ἀκαμάτσιο*). "Great Tartarus under the depth of the earth" is also spoken of as the place in which the godless men of the fourth generation were driven. The descent of Christ into the house of Hades (*Ἀϊδωνέος οἶκον*) is spoken of in verse 377 of the same book.

In Book ii. lines 180 onward, a vivid description is given of the Day of Judgment and of the Second Advent. Gehenna is there described with the monsters of Hades—the burning whips and the fiery chains. There, however, it is asserted that those who are lost shall suffer burning in much flame three times as much as the wicked works they have done, in vain seeking for death. At the close of that description, it is, however, stated that God will hear the intercession of the Virgin Mary, and deliver mankind out of the inexhaustible fire. The doctrine there set forth shows that those verses were composed several centuries at least after Christ. It ought to be noted that the recovery of mankind is supposed to take place ages after the judgment of the great day.

No prayers  
for dead.

Of prayers for the dead, as offered up by the Church of Christ, there is not a trace. It should be noted that the same doctrine is set forth in the eighth book in lines 350-357.

"The  
latter  
things."

With the vivid description of the great judgment of the nations, and of the ultimate establishment of the Messianic rule, found here and there in these strange books, we have nothing to do in our present work. Several of those descriptions are drawn from the Old Testament point of view. But although here and there mention is thus made of "the latter things," there is no trace of prayers for the dead throughout the books in their heathen, Jewish, or Christian portions.

### § 6. The Assumption of Moses

Date of  
Assump-  
tion of  
Moses.

The apocryphal book known as The Assumption of Moses was probably written between 7 B.C. and A.D. 30. It is extant only in a Latin translation, and even that is incomplete. A few Greek fragments have been gathered from quotations found in the Fathers. Its author was probably a Pharisee.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The literature of this work is given in full in the following valuable edition of it, "The Assumption of Moses, translated from the Latin

The only passage in it which has any bearing on the subject occurs in Chap. x. 9, 10. It is sufficient to prove that the writer held the common view. We quote Charles's translation :—

“ And God will exalt thee (Israel).

And He will cause thee to approach to the heaven of the stars.

And He will establish thy habitation among them.

And thou wilt look from on high and wilt see thy enemies Enemies in Gehenna.  
in Ge(henna).

And thou wilt recognise them, and rejoice.

And thou wilt give thanks and confess thy Creator.”

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sixth-century MS., the unemended text of which is published herewith, together with the text in its restored and critically emended form. Edited with Introduction, Notes, and Indices, by R. H. Charles, M.A., Trinity College, Dublin, and Exeter College, Oxford [now Professor of Biblical Greek in the University of Dublin].” London: Adam & Charles Black, 1897. The work was discovered forty years ago by Ceriani, in a MS. in the Ambrosian Library of Milan, and published by him, and afterwards published in 1869 with valuable notes by Professor M. Schmidt and Professor Adalbert Merx, in Merx's *Archiv für wissenschaftliche Erforschung des A. T.* Later by O. F. Fritzsche, in his *Libri Apocryphi Vet. Test-Grace*, 1871. Mr. Charles's work is not only the latest, but the fullest, and most important. We must, however, put in a protest against the prevalent idea that St. Jude quoted from this apocryphon. The internal evidence is, in our opinion, directly opposed to that conclusion, although the view is held by eminent scholars. That question has been discussed at some length in the “Bampton Lectures on Zechariah,” pp. 53-59, and the footnotes there, and the points which are there noticed have not been refuted. The subject is further discussed in our article on “St. Jude's Quotations from Zechariah,” published in the *Thinker* of August 1893. Nothing contained in Mr. Charles's works, or incidentally in Dr. M. R. James's Introduction to “The Testament of Abraham,” p. 16 ff. (Texts and Studies, Cambridge, 1892), has affected our arguments upon that point.

### § 7. The Apocalypse of Baruch

Apoca-  
lypse of  
Baruch.

Is a Jewish production of the first Christian century. It was probably written in Hebrew, but the Hebrew original has been lost, as well as the Greek version made from it. The Syriac version, which is a translation of the Greek, has been preserved in a MS. of the sixth century, discovered by Ceriani, and a Latin translation of that version was published by him in 1866. That scholar somewhat later published the Syriac text, in 1871. The Apocalypse of Baruch seems to have been compounded of several older writings. The work is important as showing the Jewish doctrines of the later part of the first century. The Biblical student, and even the general English reader, may consult with pleasure and profit the work as edited by Professor Charles.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Apocalypse of Baruch translated from the Syriac. Chapters i.-lxxvii. from the sixth century MS. in the Ambrosian Library of Milan, and Chapters lxxvii.-lxxxvii. The Epistle of Baruch from a new and critical text based on ten MSS. and published herewith. Edited with Introduction, Notes, and Indices, by R. H. Charles, M.A., Trinity College, Dublin, and Exeter College, Oxford [now Professor of Biblical Greek in the University of Dublin]." London: Adam & Charles Black, 1896.

Professor Charles in the introduction to his work also gives a succinct account of the literature in existence which bears the name of Baruch.<sup>1</sup> Its literature.

The Apocalypse of Baruch seems to speak of two places called Paradise (Chap. lv. 3-6), the earthly paradise in which Adam was placed, and the heavenly. A sight of the latter is said to have been granted to Adam before he fell, and to Abraham during the vision which he saw "by night among the portions of the victims" (Gen. xv. 9-21), and also was granted to Moses on Mount Sinai. The heavenly paradise, the final abode of the holy, with its extents and loveliness, is briefly depicted in Chapter li. 10, 11. "The greatness of Paradise," *i.e.* its capacious bounds, is alluded to in a later part of the book (Chap. lix. 8). Paradise.

The writer constantly speaks of the Intermediate state or Sheol (the Under-world). In alluding to the sorrows which overwhelmed those Jewish captives who beheld the destruction of Hades and Sheol.

<sup>1</sup> One of the most interesting of these is "The Rest of the Words of Baruch: A Christian Apocalypse of the year 136 A.D. The text revised, with an Introduction by J. Rendel Harris, formerly Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge, and now Professor of Biblical Languages in Haverford College, Pennsylvania." London: C. J. Clay & Sons, Cambridge University Press Warehouse, 1889. That work, however, does not come within the scope of our present inquiry.

Sheol the  
repository  
of the  
dead.

Zion and the prosperity of Babylon, Baruch exclaims: "Would that thou hadst ears, O earth, that thou hadst a heart, O dust, Blessed are ye more than we who are living" (Chap. xi. 6, 7). Sheol is viewed as the repository of all the souls of the dead (Chaps. xxi. 23 *ff.*, xxiii. 4, 5, xlviii. 16, lii. 2). But although the righteous are gathered together in Sheol or Hades, the righteous "without fear depart from this (earthly) habitation," for "trusting with joy they hope to receive the world which is promised to them" (Chap. xiv. 12, 13). The different abodes of the wicked and the righteous appear to be alluded to when it is said that God showed to Moses "the mouth of Gehenna, and the station of vengeance, and the place of faith and the region of hope" (Chap. lix. 10). The receptacles of souls in this Intermediate state are spoken of as "treasuries," where the souls of the righteous and the souls of the wicked are preserved till the day of judgment (Chap. xxx. 2-5). In the receptacles or "treasuries" in Sheol where the wicked souls are kept, the writer evidently believed that there would be some pain, at least in the thought of the doom finally reserved for them (Chaps. xxx. 4, 5, li. 2).



"The cedar which was left of the forest of wickedness," is bidden to depart after the forest, which was swept away by the waves of the fountain which flowed forth from under the vine, in these words: "Do thou also therefore depart, O cedar, after the forest, which departed before thee, and become dust with it, and let your ashes be mingled together. And now recline in anguish, and rest in torment, till thy last time come [the day of judgment], in which thou wilt come again, and be tormented still more" (Chap. xxxvi. 10, 11). The cedar of the forest.

The blessedness of the righteous in the day of resurrection is again and again alluded to in the book, as is the misery of the ungodly, who are then to depart into torment (Chap. xlv. 11, 12), and whose dwelling will then be "in the fire" (Chaps. xlv. 15, xlviii. 39, li. 2, 6). Of them it is said: "All this multitude are going to corruption, nor is there any numbering of those whom the fire devours" (Chap. xlviii. 43). The glory of the righteous is depicted in Chapter li., and they are there represented as "made like unto the angels, and equal to the stars, and they shall be changed into every form they desire, from beauty Misery of wicked. Glory of the righteous.

into loveliness, and from light into the splendour of glory" (verse 10).

The last things.

Not a hint is given throughout the work, which speaks so fully of these "last things," of any change being effected in the condition of soul, in the Intermediate state of which it speaks. The reverse is set forth in a striking passage in Chapter lxxxv. 9-13, preserved in the Syriac version, with which quotation we close our notice of this curious book :—

No prayers for the dead.

"Before, therefore, judgment exacts its own, and truth that which is its due, let us prepare our soul that we may enter into possession of, and not be taken possession of, and that we may hope and not be put to shame, and that we may rest with our fathers, and not be tormented with our enemies. For the youth of the world is past, and the strength of the creation is already exhausted, and the advent of the times is very short, yea, they have passed by; and the pitcher is near to the cistern, and the ship to the port, and the course of the journey to the city, and life to consummation. And again prepare your souls, so when ye sail and ascend from the ship ye may have rest, and not be condemned when ye depart. For lo! when the Most High shall bring to pass all these things, then will not there be again an opportunity for returning, nor a limit to the times, nor adjournment to the hours, nor change of ways, nor place for prayer, nor sending of petitions, nor receiving of knowledge, nor giving of love, nor place of repentance, nor supplication for offences, nor intercession of the fathers, nor prayer of the prophets, nor help of the righteous. There, there is the sentence of corruption, the way of fire, and the path which bringeth to Gehenna."

§ 8. *The Testament of Job*

The apocryphal book *The Testament of Job* has been lately re-edited in Greek and translated into English by Dr. R. Kohler of New York,<sup>1</sup> and has some bearing on the present subject. It is an Essene Midrash on the Book of Job, and probably considerably older than the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. Pope Gelasius I. (about A.D. 496) mentions it among the spurious Biblical works. Its misconception of the Book of Job is not without importance in the light of some modern criticisms on that remarkable book. The book is specially noteworthy as giving us an insight into the Essene views of "the life that is to come." Job is represented in it as having endured to the end because he knew the glory that would be bestowed on him. Thus in his speech to his friends, who are represented as kings, Job speaks as follows (Chap. vii. 34):—

"Be silent, and I will show you my throne, and the glory of its splendour: my glory will be everlasting, the whole world

Test. of  
Job an  
Essene  
work.

Job's  
throne.

<sup>1</sup> See "Semitic Studies in memory of Dr. Alexander Kohut." Edited by George Alex. Kohut, Berlin. S. Calvary & Co., 1897. The Greek text is also given by Dr. James in *Cambridge Texts and Studies, Apocrypha Anecdota*, ii. 1897.

shall perish, and its glory shall vanish, and all those who hold fast to it will remain beneath; but my throne is in the upper world ( $\tau\hat{\epsilon}\ \hat{\upsilon}\pi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\ \kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\acute{\upsilon}\omega$ ), and its glory and splendour will be to the right of the Saviour in the heavens. My throne exists in the holy life ( $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \tau\hat{\eta}\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\iota}\alpha\ \xi\omega\hat{\eta}$ ), and its glory in the unperishable world. The kings perish, and the rulers vanish, and their glory and pride is as the shadow in a looking-glass, but my kingdom<sup>1</sup> lasts for ever and ever, and its glory and its beauty is in the chariot of my Father."

"The  
chariot  
of my  
Father."

"The expressions 'my Father' and 'Saviour in heaven,'" writes Dr. Kohler (p. 282), "may sound Christian-like to some, but they are actually Essenic terms, and point to a pre-Christian era." "The chariot of my Father" is a reference to the cherubim seen in Ezekiel's vision (Ezek. Chaps. i. and x., comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 18) The Lord is represented as coming to Job in his chariot, and taking away his soul in the chariot (Chap. xii. 8, 9). Elsewhere (Chap. viii. 9) Job is represented as saying, "I did not hold fast to the earthly things, since the earth with all that inhabit it is unstable. But my heart holds fast to the heavens ( $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\grave{\rho}\alpha\nu\omicron\iota\varsigma$ ) because there is no trouble ( $\tau\alpha\rho\alpha\chi\acute{\eta}$ ) in heaven ( $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \omicron\upsilon\grave{\rho}\alpha\nu\hat{\omega}$ )."

<sup>1</sup> The saints in this book are all represented as crowned in the kingdom of heaven, and Job's deceased sons are spoken of in Chapter ix. 13 as having "crowns near the glory of the King, the Ruler of Heaven."

In the song sung by Eliphaz and his friends (Chap. x. 16) when they were pardoned and forgiven, Elihu, represented in this book as "imbued with the spirit of Satan," is condemned as "a son of darkness and not of light," and the following expressions are used concerning him—

Elihu condemned.

"The door-keepers of the place of darkness, (οἱ δὲ θυρωροὶ τῆς σκοτείας) shall give him their glory and beauty as share. His kingdom is vanished, his throne hath mouldered, And the honour of his stature is in Hades (ἐν τῇ ᾠδῇ).

Thus God forgot him, and the saints (οἱ ἅγιοι) forsook him, His wrath and anger shall be unto him desolation (εἰς κένωμα), and he will have no mercy in his heart nor peace.

Behold the Lord cometh !

Behold the saints have been prepared !

The crowns and the prizes of the victors precede them !

Let the saints rejoice, and let their hearts exult in gladness ;

For they shall receive the glory which is in store for them."

There is much, no doubt, objectionable in this apocryphal work in its ideas concerning phylacteries and charms, but we call attention to the fact that its eschatological ideas are entirely free from any reference to prayers for the dead, and never suggest any idea of the remission of sins in the Intermediate state.

No prayers for dead.

§ 9. *The Book of the Jubilees*

The Book  
of Jubilee,  
or the  
Little  
Genesis.

The Book of the Jubilees is an apocryphal work, the Greek version of which was known by the early Fathers, by whom it is often mentioned, especially by Epiphanius (died A.D. 402). The name of the work in Greek is generally *ἡ λεπτὴ Γένεσις*, but the Greek version has been lost for centuries. The original language in which the book was written may have been Hebrew, or more probably Aramaic. The work is, to a large extent, founded on the Book of Genesis and the opening chapters of Exodus. Considerable additions are made to the narratives of the Pentateuch, and there are not a few remarkable omissions. The closing portions of the book give the story of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and mention the institution of the passover, and the commandments concerning the year of Jubilee and the Sabbath. The ten commandments are not found in the work. The narratives are arranged according to Jubilees, whence the name of the book. It is impossible to decide as to its exact date, but it may safely be affirmed, with Littmann, that it was written somewhere

between a century before and a century after the Christian era. The Latin version, which embraces about one-third of the work, has been ably edited by Rönsch, Dillmann, and still more fully by Professor R. H. Charles, who has edited the complete book in the Ethiopic translation. Professor R. H. Charles has also given an English translation of the book, while Dr. Enno Littmann has executed an excellent translation in German.<sup>1</sup> In his "Eschatology" Charles assigns the book the date "before A.D. 10."

Latin and  
Ethiopic  
versions.

<sup>1</sup> A Syriac fragment of a portion of this Book of the Jubilees, entitled, "The Names of the Wives of the Patriarchs," was published by Ceriani in his *Monumenta*, but whether that fragment be part of the original Aramaic, or of a later translation, there is as yet no evidence. The following are the more important works upon this curious and interesting apocryphon.

Professor R. H. Charles, of the University of Dublin, published an English translation of the entire book in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* for 1893, 1894, and 1895. His great edition of the work was published in the *Anecdota Oxoniensia* in 1895, "Mashafa Kūfālē, or the Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees, otherwise known among the Greeks as ἡ λεπτὴ Γένεσις, edited from Four Manuscripts, and critically revised through a continuous comparison of the Massoretic and Samaritan Texts, and the Greek, Syriac, Vulgate, and Ethiopic Versions of the Pentateuch, and further emended and restored in accordance with the Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, and Latin Fragments of this Book, which are here published in full by R. H. Charles, M.A., Trinity College, Dublin, and Exeter College, Oxford; Oxford, 1895." The first edition of the Ethiopic Version, based on two MSS. of inferior value, was published by Dillmann, "Mashafa Kūfālē, sive Liber Jubilæorum qui idem a Græcis, ἡ λεπτὴ Γένεσις, inscribitur, versione Græca deperdita, nunc nonnisi in Geer lingua conservatus, nuper ex

One day as  
a thousand  
years.

The Book of the Jubilees contains several passages which incidentally illustrate our subject. In the outset it may be well to quote the curious passage in Chap. iv. 29 *ff.* "And in the end of the nineteenth Jubilee, in the seventh week of years, in the sixth year Adam died, and all his children buried him in the land of his creation, and he is the first who was buried in the earth. And seventy years were wanting to complete the 1000 years. For a thousand years are only one day in the testimonies of heaven, and therefore it is written concerning the tree of knowledge: 'In the day you eat thereof you shall die!' Consequently he [Adam] had not accomplished the years of this day, but died in it."

Abyssinia in Europam allatus. *Æthiopice ad duorum librorum manuum scriptorum fidem primum edidit Dr. Augustus Dillmann, Kiel u. London, 1859.* Rönsch's work is "Das Buch der Jubiläen oder Die Kleine Genesis unter Beifügung des Revidirten Textes der in der Ambrosiana aufgefundenen Lateinischen Fragmente, sowie einer von Dr. August Dillmann aus Zwei Äethiopischen Handschriften gefertigten Lateinischen Uebertragung, erläutert, untersucht u. herausgegeben von Hermann Rönsch," Leipzig, 1874. Dr. Enno Littmann has published a German translation, with critical notes, in the important work now nearly completed, published in parts: "Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments in Verbindung mit Beer, Blass, Clemen, &c., übersetzt und herausgegeben von E. Kautzsch, Professor der Theologie in Halle," Freiburg, i. B., Leipzig u. Tübingen, 1898 and 1899.



It would be out of place here to comment on the light thrown by this exegesis upon the expression used in 2 Pet. iii. 8, or, possibly, upon the "thousand years" of St. John (Rev. xx. 2, 3). The passage suggests the thought that the Biblical expression may have been common in the days of the Apostles, and hence have been made use of by them.

The thousand years  
of St. John.

In Chap. v. the corruption which preceded the Deluge is narrated. The writer followed the legendary interpretation of Gen. vi. 1, 2, which he, therefore, supposed to speak of fleshly intercourse between angels and women. Our view of the meaning of that passage in Gen. vi. is indeed very different (see Chap. vi. § 8). But, in recording that supposed transgression, the writer informs us that God commanded the fallen angels to be deprived of all authority and to be bound in the depths of the earth "until the day of the great judgment," when judgment shall be executed upon all transgressors. The giants who were the offspring of those unhallowed unions were, according to the writer, destroyed by being stirred up to war against one another until they were finally con-

The giants  
of Gen. vi.

sumed. The writer then states that God made a new and upright nature for all creatures, that they might not fall into similar sins for ever. The Book of the Jubilees states in this place that judgment is appointed for all creatures, and that that sentence is inscribed upon heavenly tablets, and nothing in heaven or on earth can escape that judgment; nor is any thing or person free from that judgment, whether in heaven or in earth, in light or in darkness, or in the Under-world (Sheol), or in the deep or dark places, "all their punishment is appointed, written and graven," &c.

The  
demons.

The book relates in Chapter x. how the children of Noah were led astray by impure demons, gives Noah's prayer for deliverance from that trouble, and states that, in answer to that prayer, nine-tenths of the demons were consigned to "the place of damnation," which place is alluded to several times in the chapter. The strange statement is made that God permitted the remaining tenth of the demons to remain in order to help Satan on the earth, though under certain conditions. There are many points of interest in this strange narrative. The title of the angels used by Noah in his prayer, namely, "thy watchers, the

fathers of these spirits," is interesting. For in that phrase there is an assimilation of the expression by which angels are designated in Dan. iv. 10, 14, 20. The judgment executed upon "the giants" is also alluded to later in the book (Chapter xx.), where Abraham's last words are recorded.

Sacrifices to the dead, but not for the dead, and prayers to demons, together with a ceremonial eating upon the graves, are all alluded to as idolatrous acts in Chapter xxii. 17. In verse 22 of that chapter the book affirms that "for all who pray to idols, and for the hated (?) there is no hope in the land of the living, but they shall descend into the Under-world (Sheol), and they will go to the place of judgment, and they have no remembrance on the earth.

Chapter xxiii. 1 narrates how Abraham, when dying, "put the two fingers of Jacob (who, according to the story, came to see the last of his grandfather) upon his eyes, and praised the God of gods, and covered his countenance and stretched out his feet, and slept the everlasting sleep, and was gathered to his fathers."

The passage is of interest, because the book

Strange  
allusions.

"The ever-  
lasting  
sleep."

Not inconsistent with resurrection.

speaks of a life after death and a judgment to come. It shows that the use of such expressions as "the everlasting sleep," and the grave being termed "the everlasting house" did not necessarily exclude the idea of a life beyond, or of a belief in the resurrection of the dead.

Shortening of man's life.

In the same chapter the general shortening of the life of man is commented on. The writer relates the state of that evil generation, and then proceeds to picture the last days when men shall forget the covenant of God, and shall carry on war with one another. He describes the judgments of God's transgressors [the transgressors in Israel being chiefly in view], and after a description of punishments on this earth, and of the sore affliction of Israel for sin, observes: "And in those days the children will begin to seek the commandments and to seek the law, and to return to the way of righteousness." The days of man's life are next described as gradually lengthened until men live once more to the age of the patriarchs. "And all their days will they pass in peace and live in joy, because there be then no Satan and no evil to destroy them." God

will bestow healing and peace, and drive away foes, and the righteous will see, and thank, and delight themselves for ever in joy. "And their bones will rest in the earth, and their spirit will have much joy, and they will acknowledge that God is he that exercises judgment and gives grace to hundreds and thousands, and to all who love him."

The description is worth noting, but it is too vague to admit of any conclusions being derived therefrom as to the belief concerning the state of souls after death.

Chapter xxiv. records the indignation of Isaac against the Philistines who stopped his wells (see Gen. xxvi. 17-22), and narrates the curses which Isaac pronounced against them. Mention is made therein of "the day of wrath and indignation in the midst of all nations," when not one of the Philistines shall be left. In imitation of the Book of Amos (Amos ix. 1-3) Isaac is described as saying that if even a Philistine were to "de-

Philistines  
in Sheol.

In Chapter xxxvi. Isaac's last words to Esau

"The  
house of  
eternity."

and Jacob are narrated. Isaac speaks of going "the way of my fathers into the house of eternity where my fathers are." He exhorted his sons to have peace with one another, saying, "If there be one of you who deals wickedly against his brother, understand from this onward that every one who deals wickedly against his brother, shall fall into his hands, and shall be blotted out of the land of the living, and his name shall perish from under the heaven. And in the day of confusion and of cursing and of anger and of wrath, he will be burnt in the burning consuming fire, as he (God) burned Sodom, so likewise will he burn his land and his city, and all that he has shall be burned up, and he be wiped out of the book of remembrance [Mal. iii. 16] of the children of men, and he shall not be written in the book of the living [Ps. lxix. 28, comp. Isa. iv. 3], but among those who are ordained to destruction, and he will endure the everlasting curse, when on that day his judgment shall be renewed everlastingly in shame, and in cursing and in anger, and in torture, and indignation, and in plague, and in sickness. I say and testify unto you, my

Punish-  
ment of  
ungodly.

sons, how the last judgment will take place upon that man who will do injustice to his brother."

Such are the pictures of the Intermediate state and of the future judgment drawn here and there in the Book of the Jubilees. Vague and indistinct as are some of the ideas presented therein of the life of departed souls, and of the punishment of the ungodly, it is clear that the writer's views on the whole corresponded with those of the other Jewish writers. Of redemption after death, of recovery after the great judgment, and of prayers for the dead in any shape or form, there is not a trace.

No  
prayers for  
the dead.

### § 10. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

This remarkable apocryphon, which purports to give the dying speeches of the twelve sons of Jacob, has been long known in the West by the edition of the great English precursor of Wyclif, Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, who died at extreme age in A.D. 1253. Grosseteste published a Latin translation. The Greek text was first published by Grabe (1698), and more perfectly by later scholars. In 1869 Dr. Robert

G

Sinker, Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge, published his Norrisian Prize Essay, with the Greek text based on two MSS. The same scholar translated the book into English, which was published in the second part of vol. xxii. of T. & T. Clark's Ante-Nicene Christian Library, the first part of the volume containing vol. ii. of the works of Lactantius. Dr. Sinker published later (1879) an appendix with a collation of two other MSS. (Rome and Patmos), and later wrote an article on the subject in "Smith and Wace's Dictionary of Christian Biography," vol. iv. Since 1879 F. C. Coneybeare has discovered an Armenian version, noticed in his article in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* for April 1893. Dr. Sinker considers the author was a Jew converted to Christianity, who lived prior to the final overthrow of Jewish independence in A.D. 135. Coneybeare regards the book as belonging to the first century before Christ, though containing later interpolations. The book is quoted by Tertullian and Origen, and therefore is a very early production. Charles notices the book in his "Eschatology," p. 192 ff.

The expression "watchers," used of angels in



Daniel, occurs several times in the work. The "heavenly tablets" spoken of in the Book of Enoch are mentioned also in this book. The seven heavens are spoken of—the second heaven containing "the spirits of retribution for vengeance on the wicked"—Messiah and his kingdom are alluded to; and Messiah is to open Paradise to the righteous when he takes to himself the kingdom, and restores Israel. Then will the saints eat of the tree of life in that Paradise, and the Gentiles be converted to God. Death is spoken of as "a long sleep" (Dan, 53) and as an "eternal sleep" (Issachar, 45), but without the phrase being understood to deny the resurrection. The resurrection is distinctly spoken of, when the righteous shall rise, and the spirits of deceit be trodden down, and "Beliar," or Satan, be destroyed. The unconverted Gentiles appear to be doomed to perish finally (Simeon, 6).

The book contains no distinct utterance concerning the Intermediate state, and no allusion is made to prayers for the dead.

There are a number of writings possibly of a similar date which are connected with the names

of Adam or Moses. These we cannot here notice in detail. The examination of the Apocalypse of Moses in an Armenian version, discovered by F. C. Coneybeare, whose article on it appears in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* for January 1895, gives the same negative result as to any allusion being made to prayers for the dead.

## CHAPTER IV

### JEWISH PRACTICES IN POST-CHRISTIAN TIMES

#### § 1. Philo Judæus

PHILO, or more correctly Philon, a Jew of a priestly family, was born at Alexandria about 20 B.C., and was a most voluminous writer. He visited Rome with some others on an embassy to the Emperor Caius or Gaius (Caligula) about A.D. 40, in order to induce that Emperor to revoke a decree which required the Jews to pay divine homage to the statues of the Emperor. The embassy failed in attaining its object, but the Emperor's murder in January A.D. 41 stopped the intended persecution of the Jews.

Philo was a believer in a Messiah, but he seems to have regarded him as a temporal deliverer. To give his ideas on that point would be to go beyond the scope of the present inquiry. We content ourselves with noticing his views on the

Philo on  
the punish-  
ment of the  
wicked.

things after death. Professor Charles, in his "Eschatology," p. 260, reviews his opinions as follows: "Apparently he did not look forward to a general and final judgment. All enter after death into their final abode. The banishment of the wicked was for everlasting (De Cherub. § 1, ed. Mang. i. 138): 'But he who is cast out by God must endure a never-ending banishment; for though the man who has not yet become the complete captive of wickedness may, on repentance, return to virtue as to his native country, from which he had gone into exile, he, on the other hand, who is in the grip and power of a violent and incurable disease, must bear his sufferings for evermore, and be flung into the place of the godless to endure unmixed and unremitting misery.' Even the wicked Jews were committed to Tartarus (De Execrat. § 6). As matter was incurably evil, there could, of course, be no resurrection of the body."

Thus it appears that, although he was no believer in the resurrection of the body, Philo in other respects did not differ much from the common opinions held by his fellow-countrymen with respect to future punishment, and he is

therefore silent upon the practice of praying for the dead.

## § 2. *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch*

We are indebted to Professor Charles for all the information we possess concerning this curious book, which has only come to light "within the last six years."<sup>1</sup> The date assigned to the original work now found in a Slavonic version is, according to Charles, from A.D. 1 to 50. The Book of the Secrets of Enoch expresses the same idea as the Book of the Jubilees (see p. 90), that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years" (2 Pet. iii. 8), and further maintains that the six thousand years of the world's history will be succeeded by a thousand years of blessedness. The Messianic kingdom is represented as concluding with the day of judgment, "the great day of the Lord." "But prior to the final judgment the souls of the departed are in intermediate places. Thus the rebellious angels are confined to the second heaven, awaiting in torment the eternal

The thousand years of blessedness.

Departed souls.

<sup>1</sup> The Book of the Secrets of Enoch, translated from the Slavonic by W. R. Morfill, M.A. [University Reader in Russian, Oxford], and edited with introduction, notes, and indices, by R. H. Charles, M.A., Oxford, 1896.

judgment (Chap. vii. 1-3). The fallen lustful angels are kept in durance under the earth (Chap. xviii. 7); Satan, being hurled down from heaven, has the air as his habitation (Chap. xxix. 4, 5)" —Charles's "Eschatology," p. 262.

Pre-existence of souls.

Professor Charles further states: "As for man, the doctrine of pre-existence is taught." The souls of men, according to our author, were created before the foundation of the world (Chap. xxiii. 5), and future places of abode have been prepared for every human soul (Chaps. xlix. 2, lviii. 5). From the latter passage these appear to constitute also the Intermediate place for human souls. In Chap. xxxii. 1, Adam is sent back to this receptacle of souls on his death, and is transferred from it to Paradise in the third heaven after the great judgment (Chap. xlii. 5).

There are, therefore, distinct peculiarities in the writer's views on these points, in which opinions are expressed somewhat different from those of the other Jewish writers already quoted.

Paradise.

Paradise, in his view, is the final inheritance of the saints, and an interesting, though somewhat sensuous, description of Paradise is given

in Chap. viii. The literal Garden of Eden is not forgotten, and is also termed Paradise. The heavenly Paradise is the "eternal inheritance" of the people of God, when there shall be enjoyment and immeasurable wealth, and joy and merriment in the light, and eternal life (Chap. xlii. 5).

The wicked are, however, cast into hell in the third heaven, where their torment will be for everlasting, for that hell is guarded by "guardians of the gates of hell" (Chap. xlii. 1), like great serpents. Those who have sinned only a little in this life suffer always in the eternal life (Chap. xlii. 2). It should be observed that all this is said of the final state, and it is not clear whether the author really had any distinct idea of the Intermediate state. He seems to have believed in no resurrection of the flesh, although he speaks of a body composed of the divine glory, such as Enoch is represented as clothed with after his translation (Chap. xxii. 8-10).<sup>1</sup>

The everlasting torment of the wicked.

<sup>1</sup> The history of Joseph the Carpenter, a New Testament apocryphon of the fifth or sixth centuries after Christ, written in Coptic, seems to preserve a trace of this idea when it speaks of Michael and Gabriel "wrapping up the soul of Joseph in a shining wrapper," made of the shining garments of the angels.

The  
Slavonic  
Enoch.

The Book of the Secrets of Enoch, termed by Prof. R. H. Charles the Slavonic Enoch, has been for centuries unknown. It was, however, known in many circles in the first three centuries of the Christian era, and in its Greek form passed under the name of the Book of Enoch. It was first brought into notice in 1892, when a Russian scholar (Kosak) in a German review called attention to the fact that there was a Slavonic translation of the Book of Enoch. The book, however, as edited by W. R. Morfill, M.A., Reader in Russian and Slavonic Languages, and Prof. R. H. Charles, has disclosed the fact that the work is entirely a different book. Prof. Charles assigns it to the first fifty years of the first century. His introduction is of great importance. The book may have been originally written in Hebrew, and it casts much light upon Jewish thought in that early period.

### § 3. Josephus

History of  
Josephus.

Flavius Josephus, the celebrated Jewish historian, was born A.D. 37, and lived on through the early years of the second century. Although



unfortunately his own biographer, and one by no means wanting in self-esteem, there is no doubt that he was eminent not only as a writer, but also as a general of no mean order. His religious views were not a little peculiar, for although a Jew both by descent and by conviction, he was in many particulars disposed to add Gentile elements to the religion of the Law and the Prophets of Israel.

We are at present concerned only with the views set forth in his works concerning the state of departed souls. In the remarkable discourse which he himself delivered to his fellow-soldiers in the den at Jotapata, after the storming of that city by the Romans, he stated that those "who depart out of this life according to the law of nature, and pay that debt which was received from God, when He that lent it to us is pleased to require it back again, enjoy eternal glory (*κλέος αἰώνιον*); that their homes and posterity are sure, their souls remain pure and obedient, they attain the most holy place of heaven, from whence, in the revolution of ages, they are again sent into pure bodies. But to those whose hands have acted madly against

Josephus  
at Jota-  
pata.

The  
punish-  
ment of  
suicides.

themselves, a darker Hades (*ἄδης σκοτιώτερος*) receives their souls. . . . Those, then, that make away with themselves, with us, indeed, they adjudge to be cast out unburied until the setting of the sun, although they consider it a lawful thing even to bury enemies."

Josephus's  
opinions.

The private opinions of Josephus have a certain amount of interest, although it is clear that his views on all points are not in accordance with the teachings of the Law of Moses, or of the writings of the Prophets of Israel. Josephus nowhere alludes to prayers being offered up by the Jews for the dead. It may be well to observe that "the extract out of Josephus's discourse to the Greeks concerning Hades," given by Whiston in his translation of the works of Josephus, is not a genuine writing of Josephus, but the work of a Christian writer.

Views  
of the  
Essenes.

In giving an account of the Essenes, a sect among the Jews of his day who were distinguished by a sounder discipline than the other Jewish sects, Josephus informs us that their doctrine was as follows: That human bodies are corruptible and mortal, but that their souls are immortal, and that the souls of the good

have their habitation in a region not oppressed with storms of rain or snow or with intense heat, but in a place which is represented by a gentle zephyr blowing perpetually from the ocean; while the bad are confined in "a dark and wintry corner" (ζοφώδη καὶ χειμέριον μυχόν) full of "never-ending punishments" (τιμωριῶν ἀδιαλείπτων), or, as it is also called, "immortal punishment" (ἀθάνατον τιμωρίαν)—Wars, ii. 8, 11.

In the same chapter Josephus states that the opinion of the Pharisees was that every soul is incorruptible (ἄφθαρτον), that the soul in the case of the good passes into another body, but the soul of the ungodly man is punished with everlasting punishment (ἀδίδω τιμωρία κολάζεσθαι). The Sadducees, according to Josephus, take away the permanence of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in Hades (καὶ τὰς καθ' ἑδού τιμωρίας καὶ τιμὰς). Wars, ii. 8, 14. •

Views of  
the Phari-  
sees.

Such is Josephus's testimony. An inquiry into its truthfulness and correctness lies beyond our present object. But it should be noted that while the writer gives these accounts of Jewish philosophical speculation on the state of the dead, he never alludes to any Jewish practice of prayers for the dead.

Josephus  
ignorant  
of prayers  
for dead.

Cumming  
and  
French's  
Discussion.

In the celebrated discussion on "The Differences between Protestantism and Popery," held at Hammersmith in 1839, between Rev. Dr. John Cumming and Daniel French, Esq., Barrister-at-Law,<sup>1</sup> in the debate on "Purgatory," the following statement was made by Mr. French: "Josephus, the Jew, informs us that the Jews were not in the habit of praying for those who had committed suicide. Granted; but for whom did they pray? Of course they did not pray for those in Abraham's bosom, or for those in hell, for the gates of hell are equally closed against pardon as against all hope; therefore they must have prayed for those who were in a *medial* state, which we call Purgatory."

Mr. French  
quotes  
Josephus.

Mr. French did not mention where the passage cited from Josephus was to be found, and Dr. Cumming left the statement without contradiction. We have been unable to trace the passage, nor have we seen it quoted in the standard controversial works. It was, however, triumphantly

<sup>1</sup> "The Hammersmith Protestant Discussion," being an Authenticated Report of the Controversial Discussion between the Rev. John Cumming, D.D., of the Scottish National Church, Crown Court, Covent Garden, and Daniel French, Esq., Barrister-at-Law, &c. New edition, with a copious index. London: Hall & Co., 1872. See p. 355, at the end of column 2.

adduced as conclusive in the course of a series of articles which appeared in April 1896, on a lecture of ours at Southend, which articles appeared in a Roman Catholic weekly newspaper, the *Universe*.<sup>1</sup>

Josephus very frequently gives instances of suicide. He expresses admiration (Antiq. v. 8, 2) at the death of Samson, which has sometimes (but unfairly) been regarded as a case of suicide. Josephus records the death of Saul (Antiq. vi. 14, 7), and in doing so combines the two statements concerning that fact so as to make out that there was some truth even in the Amalekite's statement to David (2 Sam. i. 2). He likewise records the suicide of Ahithophel (Antiq. vii. 9, 8), and of Zimri (Antiq. viii. 12, 5). In two places he narrates the suicide of many Jews when Jerusalem was taken by Pompey (Antiq. xiv. 4, 4; Wars, i.

Suicides in  
Josephus.

<sup>1</sup> It was there quoted as found in "Josephus's Wars of the Jews," chap. xci., in these words: "The Jews would not pray for those among their brethren who committed suicide." In reply to a private letter asking for the correct reference, a letter was received stating that "chap. 91" was a typographical blunder, and that "the passage quoted was c. 19." But the latter reference is also wrong. A further letter from us on the subject was left unanswered. Appeals for the correct reference have been made in vain through the columns of the *Church Times*, *Notes and Queries*, and other newspapers. Hence the source of the error is still a mystery.

Suicides in  
Jewish  
wars.

7, 5). Further, he speaks of Herod's thoughts concerning suicide (Antiq. xiv. 13, 8), admires the suicide of Phasaelus (Antiq. xiv. 13, 10; Wars, i. 13, 10); and the death of the old robber who, rather than surrender, destroyed first his seven children and his wife, and then himself (Antiq. xiv. 15, 5; Wars, i. 16, 4). He mentions the suicides of numbers of the Gadarenes (Antiq. xv. 10, 3), and of many Jews in Jerusalem in the days of Sabinus (Antiq. xvii. 10, 2; Wars, ii. 3, 3). The remarkable death of Simon at Scythopolis, who put to death his father, mother, wife, and children to save them from falling into the hands of the Syrians, and then ran his sword into his own bowels, is recorded in Wars, ii. 18, 4. Suicides were numerous at the siege of Jotapata (Wars, iii. 7, 31, 34), and are spoken of as acts of valour. Josephus, who defended that city when it was taken by storm, was urged by the Jews to commit suicide. On that occasion he argued, and at considerable length, against suicide as a great sin (Wars, iii. 8, 5, 6).

Further  
list of  
suicides.

The list of suicides noted by Josephus further includes those Jews who perished in Joppa (Wars, iii. 8, 9, 3), those who died by their own hand at

Gamala (Wars, iv. 1, 4), and when the city and Temple of Jerusalem were stormed by the Idu-means (Wars, iv. 5, 1). Numerous Jews perished by suicide during the siege of Jerusalem by Titus (Wars, vi. 9). The most remarkable of those was Eleazar, who induced a number of his men to kill themselves, their wives and children, in all 960 persons (Wars, vii. chap. 8, §§ 6, 7, 8, and chap. 9). Eleazar's address on that occasion is given at great length. But no allusion is made on that, or any other occasion, to prayers for the dead. Hence, with our present knowledge, we look upon Mr. French's statement as incorrect.

Mr.  
French's  
statement  
in cata-  
combs.  
not proven.

#### § 4. Jewish Inscriptions in the Catacombs

The Roman catacombs, as is well known, contain a large number of Christian inscriptions, to which reference shall be made in a later part of our work. Those catacombs were not by any means exclusively Christian burial-places, possibly not even predominantly so. Heathen inscriptions are to be found in them, and not a few Jewish. The latter subject has not yet been exhaustively treated. In, however, an investigation

Jewish in-  
scriptions  
in cata-  
combs.

H

into the government and arrangements of the Jewish congregations in Rome during the times of the Cæsars, Schürer long ago called attention to the value of the Jewish inscriptions in the catacombs, which cast much light upon the condition of the Jews in heathen times in that great metropolis of the world.<sup>1</sup> The earliest Jewish inscriptions are not, as one might have anticipated, written in Hebrew, but are mainly in Greek, not a few being in very indifferent Latin. The special object which Schürer had in view in his interesting, but comparatively little known, treatise was not to investigate the religious opinions of the Jews, but simply their local government and arrangements as a community in Rome.

Schürer's  
essay.

Schürer's essay contains some forty-five Greek inscriptions, some of which are in barbarous Greek. About twenty of those epitaphs, selected, as must be borne in mind, without a controversial object in view, contain clauses in which it is stated that the departed died "in peace," or that the relatives still living hoped or wished that their dead friends might be "in peace."

<sup>1</sup> E. Schürer, *Gemeindeverfassung der Juden in Rom in der Kaiserzeit* nach den Inschriften dargestellt. Leipzig, 1879.



Inscriptions Nos. 1, 3, and 6 close with the valedictory expressions: *εν ερηνη* (or *ειρηνη*) *κοιμησις* (or *η κοιμησις*) *αυτου*, “his rest (or, *sleeping*) is in peace.” It is quite possible, but by no means certain, that this and other similar phrases may have been taken to express a wish or prayer. No. 8, erected over the tomb of a daughter Salome, reads *εν ειρηνη η κοιμησεις* [*sic*] *αυτης*—“her rest (or, *sleeping*) is in peace.” No. 9 closes in the same way as No. 3, and both epitaphs contain mistakes in the spelling of the words used. No. 11 is an inscription, partly in Latin and partly in Greek, which is written in Latin letters over a lady named Beturia Paulina, which closes with the words: *en irenae ay cymisis autis*—“her rest is in peace.” The misspelling and the incorrect transliteration of the Greek words is worthy of notice.

No. 12, an epitaph, also in bad Greek, closes with the statement of hope, or expression of desire: *μετα των δικων η κυμησις αυτου* — “his resting-place is with the just.” No. 14 is a mutilated epitaph which contains the remains of: *εν ειρην[η η κοιμησις] αυτων*, “their resting (sleeping) is in peace.”

Sleeping  
in peace.

Resting-  
place with  
the just.

"In  
peace."

Nos. 15, 16, and 17 all contain the phrase, with more or less faults of spelling, "Thy rest is in peace," *ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἡ κοιμησις σου*. No. 18, which was erected over the tomb of a lady *Ουρσακία*, contains similarly in bad Greek (*ἡ κημῖς*), "her rest is in peace." Epitaph No. 19 is in Latin, with Greek at the close: *ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἡ κοιμησις σου*, "thy sleeping (or *rest*) be in peace." No. 20 has a similar termination. No. 21 ends with the phrase, somewhat mutilated, *ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἡ κοιμησις ὑμῶν*, "may your rest be in peace." No. 22 ends similarly, "his resting be (or *is*) in peace." No. 24 has "may thy rest be in peace," and so Nos. 30 and 31; and No. 26 has the longer phrase: *μετα τῶν δικαίων ἡ κοιμησις σου*, "thy sleeping (or *rest*) is (or *be*) with the just."

Similarity  
with  
Christian  
epitaphs.

The close similarity existing between these inscriptions and those over Christian burial-places might well lead to the conclusion that the Christians copied the Jews, or the Jews the Christian epitaphs. We have already called attention to the fact that all such expressions may be interpreted either as asserting a blessed hope, or as expressive of a pious wish or prayer. Even if explained in the latter sense, such wishes or

prayers cannot be accepted as evidence that either Jews or Christians in that early era believed the Intermediate state to be a state in which the righteous could be assisted by their friends on earth, or the ungodly relieved from penal suffering by the means of those petitions. If such valedictory phrases could be proved to be of Jewish origin, they might be supposed to be founded on the well-known passage in Isa. lvii. 2.

But it must on the other hand be borne in mind that very similar inscriptions are found on heathen tombs of the same, and of an earlier, date. There is abundant evidence in the latter cases to show the valedictory wishes were not for the souls of the departed in Hades, but for the rest of the bodies committed to the earth, or of their ashes enclosed in the mortuary urn.

In turning aside for the moment to compare Pagan inscriptions, it should be noted in the outset that in Latin the verbs *quiescere*, *acquiescere*, and *requiescere* (all indicative of *rest*), are employed in the sense of taking of rest in death; in other words as synonyms of *to die*. The thought expressed by the patriarch was well understood by the heathen: "There the wicked

Heathen  
inscrip-  
tions.

Pagan in-  
scriptions.

Prayers  
for the  
bodies of  
the dead.

cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest" (Job iii. 17). Thus the Latin poets often speak of individuals themselves, or of their bodies, as resting in the grave. They speak of the bones and ashes resting in the tomb or in the sepulchral urn, and even of the rest of "the shade" or soul. But there is no instance, of which we are aware, of prayer being offered up for the relief from pain, or the improvement in virtue, of any soul in the world beyond. There are many prayers in the writings of the poets, and in inscriptions on tombs, praying that the tombs of the departed might be left in peace, that prowling dogs might not root out the bones of the buried friends, and that the earth or sand might not press too heavily on their remains.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It may perhaps be well to cite a few passages. Virgil, *Aen.* i. 24, says of Antenor, who had finished his course: "Nunc placida compositus pace quiescit;" and in *Eclog.* x. 33:—

"O mihi tunc quam molliter ossa quiescent  
Vestra meos olim si fistula dicat amores."

Ovid, *Amores*, iii. 9, 67:—

"Ossa quieta, precor, tuta requiescite in urna  
Et sit humus cineri non onerosa tuo."

Ennius, *Fragmenta* (ex *Thyeste*):—

"Neque sepulchrum quô se recipiat,  
Habeat, portum corporis, ubi  
Remissa humana vita, corpus requiescet a maleis."

The phrase *requiescat in pace* (R.I.P.), “may he R.I.P. rest in peace,” is so generally supposed to be a clear evidence of prayers for the dead, that it may be useful to remind our readers that both *requiescit* in the indicative mood, and the subjunctive *requiescat* in an optative or precative signification, are found in heathen epitaphs, and occasionally *requiescit in pace*. Seneca (*ad Marc.* 19, 5) writes of death, *excipit illum magna et eterna pax*, “the great and eternal peace has received him” (compare our remarks on p. 94). Such phrases as *hic requiescit*, “here rests”; *hic cubat*, “here lies down”; *hic sita est in pace*, “here she is deposited in peace”; *hic situs est* (of a man), *hic situm corpus*, *quiescant in pacem*, are all found in inscriptions placed over heathen graves. The great folio volumes of the *Corpus Inscript. Latinorum* supply abundant examples of such epitaphs.

There are also numerous instances, too, of wishes, one might even say of prayers (but not, however, in the Jewish or Christian sense of the expression) to be found on heathen tombs. See, Prayers on  
heathen  
tombs.

Martial vi. 18, x. 61, may also be referred to, as also ix. 30 :—

“Sit tibi terra levis, mollique regaris arena,  
Ne tua non possit eruere ossa canis.”

for instance, in *Corp. Inscript. Lat.*, vol. i., No. 5811, erected by his fellow-sailors to Cæcilius Niger, which reads as follows:—

“Nunc tibi navales pauci damus ultima dona,  
Hoc et defuncti corpore munus erit  
Ossa tuis urnis optamus dulce quiescant  
Sitque levis membris terra molesta tuis.”

Or, No. 1751, *corpus hic quiescat, in suo hic requiescat* (No. 4475). So in vol. ii., in a four-lined inscription to Q. Alfius Julianus, there occurs the contraction, *Bervaliā*, explained by Mommsen to be *bene requiescas valeam dicit viator*. Compare the wishes or prayers for the rest of the body in the grave cited before in note on p. 118. It may be well to observe that Mommsen (in his “Hist. of Rome,” translated by Dickson, n. e. 1894, vol. ii., p. 91) states that the Greek customs with regard to matters connected with burials gradually gained ground in Italy, and with them the non-Italian practice of placing inscriptions in honour of the dead on the tomb. Of the latter he observes that the epitaph of Lucius Scipio (Consul 456) “is the oldest example known to us.”

Honorific  
expres-  
sions.

The complimentary and honorific expressions, “peace be upon so and so,” which are so fre-

quently to be met with in Jewish mediæval writings, and in Arabic literature (historical, biographical, or geographical) cannot be regarded in the proper sense as prayers for the dead. As a rule, they occur only in the case of remarkable persons, whose names were held in honour, and therefore are properly regarded as purely honorific. The names of men and women who are spoken of in the Old Testament or in the New Testament writings were always honoured by such exclamations. The names, too, of the great prophet of Islam, and of the Mohammedan saints, are seldom mentioned without such honorific expressions. But no instance can be cited in which such exclamations are made use of with the expectation of assisting in the Intermediate state those who have departed this life in an imperfect state of purification, or with the hope of relieving from pain and punishment the souls of the departed.

Mohammedan saints.

### § 5. The Crimean Inscriptions

Professor Dr. Daniel Chwolson of St. Petersburg called attention to the inscriptions at Tschufutkale, in the Crimea, discovered by

Chwolson's essay.

Abraham Firkowitsch, in his essay *Achtzehn Hebräische Grabschriften aus der Krim*, published in the "Mémoires of the Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg" in 1865. The publication of Professor Chwolson's treatise led to much discussion, and certain peculiarities touching the peculiar eras in those inscriptions were eagerly discussed by able scholars, as Dr. A. Geiger and others. The later investigations of M. E. Harkavy, Librarian in the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, and of Professor Dr. H. L. Strack of Berlin, led to the discovery of the fact that A. Firkowitsch had, in the interests of the Karaite Jews, seriously tampered with the dates of those inscriptions. Notwithstanding the arguments in defence of their antiquity, ably put forth by Professor Chwolson in his later work, *Corpus Inscriptionum Hebraicarum*, published in St. Petersburg in 1882, the inscriptions in question cannot be relied on as genuine inscriptions belonging to the first, second, and third centuries of the Christian era. For, until Firkowitsch's alterations of the dates was discovered, it was supposed that there were at least seven of those inscriptions which had dates which corre-

Firko-  
witsch's  
falsifica-  
tions.



sponded respectively to A.D. 6, A.D. 30, A.D. 89, A.D. 179, A.D. 197, A.D. 262, and A.D. 305.

We deeply regret that any doubt should rest upon the genuineness of those inscriptions. The first of the six mentioned above contains the wish or prayer "May his rest be in Eden." The second and third contain no such pious wish or prayer for the dead. The fourth contains a wish or prayer, "May he go into peace (and) rest in his bed"; compare Isa. lvii. 2, Ps. cxlix. 5. The fifth contains the wish, "May her soul be bound in the bundle of life"; compare 1 Sam. xxv. 29. The sixth contains a similar wish or prayer. The seventh contains two such, "May his rest be in Eden, in glory;" "May his soul be bound in the bundle of life with the Eternal, his God, and his resting-place be (in) glory."

Crimean  
inscrip-  
tions.

Dean Luckock refers to the Crimean inscriptions in ten editions of his work, "After Death," and remarks that "they will require further investigation than they have yet undergone before we can accept them as trustworthy evidence." It is therefore well to state what the inscriptions in question are. The reference to them which occurred in p. 64 is left out of the

Luckock's  
use of the  
Crimean  
Inscrip-  
tions.

“new edition” of Dr. Luckock’s work published in 1896. It should, however, be noted that we do not much object to such wishes for the dead as are used in those Crimean inscriptions, whatever their correct date may be. What may fairly be objected to is, that such pious wishes for the welfare of the dead should be made the basis of those petitions for the dead which have been so sadly characteristic of the corrupt Christian Churches.

#### § 6. The Inscription of Aden and other Hebrew Inscriptions

Argument  
from the  
Aden in-  
scription.

Dean Luckock, in ten editions of his work, “After Death,” ranging from 1879 to 1896, when “a new” and cheaper edition was issued, appeals to the evidence of “old Jewish inscriptions in different countries” in support of the statement “that the Jews prayed for the dead at the time of our Lord.” He says, “The first to be noticed are those which have been discovered by R. Jacob Saphir, a distinguished Jew who has travelled through Egypt, Arabia, Jemen, and other countries with the special object of collecting records of his nation among extant monu-

ments of antiquity and traditional stories. Several of the inscriptions deciphered by him bear on their face dates which carry us back beyond the present era. Some of the tombstones are inscribed with different formulas of prayers for the dead; for the most part they are abbreviated by the use of initial letters only, precisely the same as in the custom of writing R.I.P. on the graves of Christians. The commonest are the following: 'May his rest be glory,' 'May his memory be for a blessing,' 'May his memory be for the resurrection,' 'May the Spirit of the Lord lead him to rest,'" p. 62.

All the inscriptions discovered by R. Jacob Saphir, together with the Aden inscription now in the British Museum, are dated after "the era of stars" or "contracts." That era is the Seleucidian era, which begins 311 B.C. But forasmuch as the Jews were in the habit of dropping the thousands, the 1st, 28th, and 29th after "the era of contracts" is really the 1001, 1028, and 1029 after the Seleucidian era. Dr. Schiller-Szinessy is cited by Dr. Luckock in his note on p. 62 as suggesting this very explanation, though the Dean unfortunately fell into the

Saphir's  
Inscriptions.

mistake of seeking to discover the date according to the Christian era by simply subtracting the numbers 1, 28, and 29 respectively from 311; which would bring out the result of 310 B.C., 283 B.C., and 282 B.C.

The  
Dean's  
mistake.

Hence the Dean fell into a mistake, from which he would have been saved had he verified his references, which Cambridge men in particular are always supposed to be careful to do. For the Aden inscription, which is also cited as a proof of prayers for the dead prior to the time of our Lord, is similarly dated 29, after "the era of contracts," that is A.D. 718. The Dean gives the date 282 B.C. in nine editions, and it occurs even in part of the tenth or "new and cheaper edition," printed in 1896. A.D. 718 was the date conspicuously assigned to that inscription in two places in Professor Dr. William Wright's "Facsimiles of Manuscripts and Inscriptions."<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> The facsimile given in Professor W. Wright's work, Plate 29, is styled "Hebrew Inscription, A.D. 718, British Museum." At the bottom of the opposite page there is a note within square brackets, as follows: ["In describing this Plate and Plate 30, the Committee have received much assistance from the Rev. Dr. Schiller-Szinessy, of Cambridge."] At the top of that page of description is placed "British Museum, A.D. 718." On p. 63 in ten editions of Dr Luckock's work the following footnote appears: "For a full description of the epitaph by Dr. Schiller-Szinessy, see Plate 24 [it should have been 29] of

Dean has been obliged to confess that he never saw Professor Wright's book, although he referred in the footnote on p. 63 to that work, and to the description of the epitaph there given as the work of Dr. Schiller-Szinessy, which footnote appears in ten editions of his book, "After Death."

M. A. Levy, so far back as 1867, in an article in the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenl. Gesellschaft* (pp. 156-160), gives in full the reasons for assigning the inscription to A.D. 718. Several eminent scholars, including Professor Euting of Strassburg, assigned the inscription to A.D. 818, or even as late as A.D. 918. Professor William Wright, however, states in his "additions and corrections" to his folio volume, that "any later date seems to be out of the question." The very same view of the date of the Aden inscription is given by F. W. Madden on p. 39 of his classic work on

Prof. W.  
Wright on  
Aden in-  
scription.

'Facsimiles of Ancient MSS., Oriental Series, of the Palæographic Society, Part II.' The correct title of the completed work referred to is "The Palæographical Society: Facsimiles of Manuscripts and Inscriptions (Oriental Series). Edited by William Wright, M.A., LL.D., Fellow of Queens' College, and Professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge, Correspondant de l'Institut de France, &c. London: Printed by William Clowes & Sons, Limited, Stamford Street and Charing Cross, 1875-1883."

the "Coins of the Jews" (Boston, 1881), in his discussion on the forms of Hebrew letters.

Luckock's  
"new  
edition."

As Dean Luckock's book has gone through so many editions, we cannot leave those inscriptions unnoticed; for in the "new edition" of his work (Longmans, Green & Co., London, New York, and Bombay, 1898) the Dean has not thought fit to state distinctly the mistake into which he fell on that point. In the "new edition," indeed, he has completely altered pp. 61-66. He has accepted the correction as regards the Crimean inscriptions, and has erased all reference to Saphir's inscriptions, and to the Aden inscription.<sup>1</sup> But he has done so without calling the reader's attention to the fact. In place of the pages erased there is substituted an "Appendix" dealing with some of my criticisms upon other matters. Dr. Luckock's criticisms on those points will be found answered in their respective places.

<sup>1</sup> My original criticisms on the Dean's work were contained in three articles in the *Church Intelligencer* for February, March, and April 1895, which were republished in a revised form in a twopenny pamphlet by the Church Association. Copies of all these were forwarded on publication to Dean Luckock.

## § 7. The Kaddish Prayer

The prayer known as "the Kaddish" forms part of the morning service of the Synagogue, and is of great antiquity. It is written in Aramaic, and may in part be earlier than the Christian era, though that is by no means certain. The following is a translation of it in its entirety<sup>1</sup>:—

The  
Kaddish  
prayer.

"Exalted and sanctified be His great Name in the world which He created according to His will. And may He establish His kingdom in your lifetime and in your days, and in the lifetime of the whole House of Israel, speedily, and in a near time.

"R. And say, Amen. Be His great Name blessed for ever, and for ever and ever.

"Blessed, and praised, and celebrated, and exalted, and extolled, and honoured, and magnified, and worshipped be the name of the Holy One; blessed be He, although He be exalted above all benedictions, and hymns, thanks, and consolations, which are said in the world. R. And say, Amen.

"Upon Israel, and upon our Rabbis, and upon their scholars, and upon all scholars of their scholars, and upon all that sit and busy themselves in the Law in this place, and in any other place, may there be to us and to them great peace, grace, and mercy,

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<sup>1</sup> The Prayer is given in great part in Warren's (F. E.) "Liturgy and Ritual of the Ante-Nicene Church." London: C. K. S., 1897. There are slight differences in the form of this prayer. It is modified and curtailed in "The Authorised Daily Prayer Book of the United Hebrew Congregations in the British Empire." 3rd ed. 1892.

and compassion, and plentiful provision, and deliverance from the Lord of Heaven and earth. *R.* And say, Amen.

"May great peace be from Heaven, and prosperous life be upon us, and upon all Israel.

*R.* And say, Amen.

"He who makes peace in His heights, let Him in His compassions make peace upon us, and upon all Israel.

*R.* And say, Amen."

Dr. A.  
M'Caul  
on Jewish  
Prayers.

Dr. Alexander M'Caul has pointed out in his "Old Paths" (English edition, p. 149), that later Jews have employed that ancient prayer as a prayer for a deceased parent, in the same manner as superstitious Christians have also used the *Ave Maria* as a prayer for the dead, although the "Hail Mary" found in Luke i. is no prayer whatever. The Jewish custom is thus referred to in *foreh Deah* 376, cited by M'Caul:—

"Therefore the custom is for twelve months to repeat the prayer called Kaddish, and also to read the lesson in the prophets, and to pray the evening prayer at the going out of the Sabbath, for that is the hour when the souls return to hell [to Gehenna, for they imagined that the lost souls got a relaxation from punishment on the Sabbath]; but when the son prays and sanctifies in public, he redeems his father and mother from hell."

The Kad-  
dish.

It will be seen, however, from the translation given above, that the Kaddish does not contain a single clause in which a petition is distinctly offered up for departed souls. The prayer con-



tains no allusion whatever to the dead ; although, on account of its great antiquity, it was employed by the Jews in later times with that special intention. The prayer cannot be accepted as any proof whatever of the antiquity of either Jewish belief in the efficacy of prayer for the dead, or of such prayers having formerly formed any portion of the ancient Synagogue service. Dr. Luckock has persistently cited it as such evidence ("After Death," p. 56). He says, "Now although in its original form this contains no direct prayers for the dead, indirect reference to their use is traceable in several portions of it." The "indirect reference" of prayer to the Blessed Virgin in the angelic salutation in Luke i. could be as easily proved if Dr. Luckock's arguments were admitted. Those who, under a fixed determination to discover their peculiar notions everywhere, are prepared to maintain that every prayer for the Church of Christ necessarily includes the souls of the faithful departed, do not seem to comprehend the fact that they are simply assuming as proved the very point for which they are called upon to produce some evidence.

No prayer  
in it for  
the dead.

## § 8. The Testimony of the Talmuds

When we turn to examine the Talmuds, whether it be the Talmud of Jerusalem, or the more bulky volumes of the Talmud of Babylon, one comes across facts which are utterly irreconcilable with the idea that prayers for the dead formed any part of the popular theology of the Jews in the days of our Lord, or in the early centuries after Christ.

The  
Treatise  
Berachoth.

The following remarkable account is given in the first treatise of the Talmud (known as *Berachoth*, or "Benedictions," p. 28) of the death of Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai. Ben Zakkai died shortly after the destruction of the Temple by Titus, but not before he had reorganised the whole Jewish ecclesiastical arrangements, and considerably modified the practices of the Law of Moses in order to adapt them to the supposed necessities of those times. There was at that time no Temple, and no place of sacrifice. The Romans had put the priests to the sword; the Jews were even excluded from the ruins of the Holy City. Ben Zakkai was in reality the

founder of the new religion in which prayers and alms and study of the Law were substituted for the old Mosaic ordinances, and in which the Rabbi, to some extent, took the place of the priest. Hence Ben Zakkai has been well designated by the great Jewish historian, Graetz, "the founder of Talmudic Judaism," and his sentiments are therefore of peculiar value upon the question of prayers for the dead.

Ben Zakkai, the founder of modern Judaism.

The Talmud states that Rabban Johanan was visited on his death-bed by his scholars. When he saw them he began to weep. His scholars exclaimed, "O Light of Israel, Pillar on the right hand [probably alluding to the pillar Jachin in the Temple of Solomon, 1 Kings vii. 21], the mighty Hammer! why dost thou weep?" He said to them, "If they were about to bring me before a king of flesh and blood, who to-day is, and to-morrow will be in the grave, even then I might weep. If he were angry with me, his anger is not eternal; and if he were to cast me into chains, his chains are not eternal; and if he were to put me to death, it would not be eternal death; I might appease him with words, or bribe him with riches. But now they are about to lead me before the

Ben Zakkai's death-bed scene.

King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He! who liveth and abideth for everlasting; and if He casts me into chains, His chains are eternal; and if He kills me, it is everlasting death; and I cannot appease Him with words, nor bribe Him with mammon. Nor is that all: there are before Him two ways; one leads to the Garden of Eden, and one to Gehenna, and I know not to which way they may conduct me; and shall I not weep?"

It is not necessary, with the object immediately in view, to quote the conclusion of the story, which sets forth that the Rabbi was comforted by the idea which suddenly seized his mind that Hezekiah, King of Judah, had arrived to conduct him to the judgment-seat of God. It is, however, clear from what has been already cited that R. Johanan ben Zakkai considered the judgment which he expected immediately after death to be final; and that he did not dream of any atonement being possible on the other side of the grave. He had no idea that he could be assisted in another world by the prayers of the scholars or friends whom he left behind on earth. No Puritan of the seventeenth century could have expressed

No thought  
of prayers  
for the  
dead.

himself in clearer language than did the great "founder of Talmudic Judaism," who lived and taught almost contemporaneously with the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

In the Appendix in p. 63-66, of the "new edition" (1898) of his work, "After Death," Dr. Luckock does not condescend to notice this remarkable story, nor the passages cited also in our pamphlet from the Pirke Aboth (see later in § 9). But he refers to Dr. Adler, "the present chief Rabbi, for valuable testimony in refutation" of our views.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Luckock adds:—

"He [the chief Rabbi] further shows that in the article above cited [that of M. Israel Lévi] there is a flat contradiction of the view that Dr. Wright takes of it, as it contains a passage from the "Talmud Jerushalmi, Sanhedrin," p. 29, that Moses by his prayer redeemed the descendants of Korah from Sheol; and another passage from "Sota," p. 10, to show that David also helped his son Absalom after his death by his prayers and lamentation into the world of the blessed."

Dr. Luckock does not seem to understand the special point in dispute. It is whether prayers

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Luckock's statement on this point is obscure because he has not cited the "testimony" referred to. We suppose that the Chief Rabbi differs from M. Israel Lévi as to the date at which the day of the Commemoration of souls was first instituted. That, however, is of very secondary consideration,

Stories of  
deliver-  
ance out  
of hell.

for the dead were a Jewish practice in the time of our Lord. The passages which we have already cited are evidence to the contrary. The imaginations of individual Talmudists of a later age are no evidence whatever. We might as well appeal to the well-known story of Pope Gregory delivering by his prayers the soul of the Emperor Trajan from hell, or quote the story of the deliverance of Falconilla, an idolatrous Gentile, from the same place, as proofs that the Church did not believe hell to be a place of eternal punishment. Vain legend-mongers recorded such extraordinary and marvellous deliverances, which even they regarded as exceptional instances. But such legends would not justify the Church in offering up prayers on behalf of the souls shut up in the prison of the lost.

Arch-  
bishop  
Ussher's  
Answer.

Those wonderful stories, and others, which taught that saints on earth might by their intercession obtain the complete deliverance, or at least a diminution of the torment, of the wicked, may be found cited in Archbishop Ussher's "Answer to a Challenge made by a Jesuite in Ireland," London, 1631, at pp. 243-253. Archbishop Ussher's work has been often reprinted, and is so

generally available that it is unnecessary to do more than refer to its pages.

Dr. Luckock seems to be satisfied with letting judgment go by default by ignoring the real arguments on the other side.

### § 9. The Pirke Aboth

The Pirke Aboth, which is one of the tracts of the Talmud, is the golden book of ancient Judaism. We quote from the excellent English translation of Dr. Charles Taylor, Master of St. John's, Cambridge,<sup>1</sup> adding occasional explanatory remarks. In Chapter iv. 23, 24, we read, "R. Jacob said, This world is like a vestibule before the world to come; prepare thyself at the vestibule that thou mayest be admitted into the hall. He used to say, Better is one hour of repentance and good works in this world than all the life of the world to come; better is one hour of refreshment of spirit in the

The Pirke  
Aboth a  
gem.

<sup>1</sup> "Sayings of the Jewish Fathers, comprising Pirke Aboth in Hebrew and English, with Notes and Excursuses. Edited for the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press. By Charles Taylor, D.D., Master of St. John's College, Cambridge." Second Edition with additional Notes, &c. Cambridge University Press, 1897.

world to come than all the life of this world." The sayings of R. Jacob are also quoted in several other tracts of the Talmud.

Rabbi  
Jacob.

The Rabbi Jacob here mentioned was one of the early Jewish Fathers, and entered into controversy with some of the great pupils of Rabbi Akiba. The latter was the life and soul of that great upheaval against the Roman tyranny, of which the military genius was Bar Cochba, and which was crushed after a tremendous struggle and awful loss of life at Bither or Bether (*Castra Vetera*), A.D. 130.

Rabbi  
Akiba.

Jewish and  
Puritan  
doctrine.

The doctrine underlying these sayings of R. Jacob is identical, so far as it goes, with the teachings of the Puritan theology. It lays down as a self-evident axiom that man must prepare in this world for the world to come, and rejects the idea that those who neglect the opportunities given them in this life will have a second chance given them in the world beyond the grave.

Akiba's  
sayings.

Among the numerous sayings attributed to R. Akiba, there is not one which hints at the practice of prayers for the dead. A summary of the teaching of that great Rabbi is given in



Aboth, iii. 25. "He used to say, Everything is given on pledge (חֶבֶץ, ἄρραβών); and the net [that is, of death, Eccles. ix. 12] is cast over all the living. The office is open; and the broker [the Lord of the world] gives credit [allows men freely to borrow, recording, however, what they have borrowed]; and the ledger [חֶסֶד, πίναξ] is open; and the hand writes; and whosoever will borrow comes and borrows; and the bailiffs go round continually every day [*i.e.* the angels of death, summoning men to their doom], and exact from a man whether he will or no; and they have whereon to lean [*i.e.* the angels are well acquainted with the actions of each, and with God's law defining good and evil]; and the judgment is a judgment of truth. And everything is prepared for the Banquet," *i.e.* the great feast provided for the just in the world to come.

The teaching here also is substantially that set forth in the despised Puritan theology. The present time is the day of opportunity, but the opportunity once lost cannot be recalled. The punishments of the future world cannot be mitigated or evaded by the instrumentality of prayers offered up by friends on earth; while the joys of

Oppor-  
tunity lost  
cannot be  
regained.

the blessed are secure to them, whether their names be remembered or forgotten on the earth below.

The popular Jewish theology.

This is only a sample of the teaching prevalent in the days close to the time of our Lord's life on earth. The idea of prayers for the dead, and of an atonement for transgressors cut off in sin (though here and there such a notion may have crossed the minds of individual thinkers) could not have entered deeply into the popular theology, when such were the sentiments of the leaders of thought in that day. But as popular theology no doubt more or less pervaded the Synagogue services, evidence of the kind here presented is distinct proof that in the Synagogue services at the time of our Lord there were no prayers for the dead.

### § 10. *The Midrashim*

Midrash on the judgment on man.

It may be useful to append a passage found in the Midrash Rabba, which no doubt sets forth the doctrine of a considerably later age, but of an age which was still in harmony with the doctrine taught in the days of our Lord and His Apostles. We give a free paraphrase of the comment on Eccles. i. 15. "That which is crooked

cannot be made straight ; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered." The Midrash, speaking on that verse, says : There are unrighteous men in this world who have been companions together ; one of them, however, repents before his death, and the other does not. The former stands then on the side of the company of the righteous, but the latter on the side of the company of the ungodly. The ungodly man, seeing his former comrade among the righteous, exclaims : Is there then partiality shown in this world beyond the grave, for this man was my comrade ? We have stolen together, we have together committed robbery, and done all that was bad while in the world ; and why does he stand in the congregation of the righteous, and I stand in the congregation of the wicked ? Then says one to him, Thou fool, thy comrade saw thy shameful conduct and its bitter results, and sought to change his own conduct while in life, and therefore he has been granted the honour of forming part of the congregation of the righteous. Thou also hadst the chance given to thee, and hadst thou made use of it, thou also wouldst have been placed in the congregation of the righteous. Let me then,

Different  
end of  
com-  
panions.

Lost  
opportunities  
cannot be  
regained.

says he to the angels, go now and do repentance. Thou fool, they answer him, knowest thou not that the world beyond the grave is like the Sabbath, but the world from whence thou comest like the evening before the Sabbath; and the man that has not made preparation, how can he feast on the Sabbath? The world from whence thou comest is like the land, and this world like the sea; the man who, while yet on land, does not prepare the things necessary for his voyage, how can he partake of them when on the sea? The world beyond the grave is like a wilderness, the world from which you have come like an inhabited country; he that makes no preparation when in the inhabited country will not have the means of feeding when in the wilderness. He gnashes with his teeth and tears his flesh, and says: Let me not see in my punishment the reward of my comrade. Thou fool! they reply to him, these are the arrangements of the Almighty that the righteous shall not come near the unrighteous, or the unrighteous near to the righteous. He then rends his clothes, and tears his hair in despair.

We adduce the above passage to show that the popular Jewish theology did not widely differ

from the picture drawn in Baxter's "Saints' Rest" of the horrible state of the wicked. It is clear, if such were the views then prevalent, the Jewish theology of our Lord's day was not that "Broad Church" theology which some have described. The idea that pardon may be granted in another world, and that prayers ought to be offered up for the dead on earth, were both opposed to the common Synagogue teaching in our Lord's day.

Jewish  
theology  
not Broad.

We are far from asserting that the Midrashim are always consistent, and that we do not often hear "two voices," or more, in those curious compilations of exegetical interpretation. For instance, in the Midrash on Koheleth (upon Eccles. vii. 14) we read that R. Acha explained that verse thus: "Be among the seeing (Isa. lxvi. 24) and not among the seen, of whom it is written, 'Their worm dieth not.' For Gehenna is made opposite to Paradise. [*Question.*] How great is the interval between them? [*Answer.*] A handbreadth, or, according to R. Johanan, a wall broad. According to the Rabbis, both are opposite one another, that one can look from one into the other."

Midrashim  
differ.

Gehenna  
and Para-  
dise.

On verse 15 we read: "As long as a man lives

God hopes for his conversion; but if he be dead, there is no hope (Prov. xi. 7). The case is like that of a band of robbers who lay bound in prison. One of them made an opening, through which all the robbers escaped but one, whom the jailer prepared to beat with a stick. Thou unfortunate! said he, here is, however, a hole, and thou hast not escaped out through it. So says God to the wicked: The way of return was open to you, but you have not entered in through it; for you there is now that hope gone (Job ii. 20)."

Some of the later Rabbis, however, considered that there was hope even for sinners cast into Gehenna (see Chapter V.).

Our thesis. Our thesis, however, is that all those later modifications were but amendments of the old doctrine, which was that there was no hope for the wicked on the other side of the grave. Whether liberal or illiberal, narrow or broad, such was the doctrine everywhere taught in the early age of Judaism and of Christianity.

### § 11. *The Siphre*

Dr. Luckock, aided no doubt by Dr. Schiller-Szinessy, whose "Addresses" he quotes in defence

of some fanciful explanations of passages in our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, maintains that much light is thrown by the *Siphre* upon the meaning of the prayer offered up in the case of a murder committed by unknown persons, by the elders of the city nearest to the scene of the outrage. The prayer given by Moses is as follows:

"Be merciful, O Lord, unto Thy people Israel, whom Thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto Thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them" (Deut. xxi. 8). The *Siphre*, or Midrash on the fourth and fifth books of Moses, some parts of which may be as old as A.D. 180-220, gives the following, quoted and expounded by Dr. Luckock (p. 60): "*Forgive Thy people*, that is, the living; *whom Thou hast redeemed*, that is, the dead, which shows that the dead also want an atonement."

The *Siphre*  
on Deut.  
xxi. 8.

That passage, however it may be explained, is no satisfactory evidence of a general belief in the efficacy of prayers for the dead in our Lord's time. The expressions are too vague to admit of such a deduction being made. One might admit as a general truth that "the dead also want an atonement." What, however, are the dead persons

K

M. Israel  
Lévi's ex-  
planation.

under the circumstances Moses speaks of who are supposed to be prayed for on such an occasion? M. Israel Lévi, in his article in the *Revue des Études Juives* (Juillet-Septembre 1894), on *La Commémoration des âmes dans le Judaïsme*, points out that the doctors of the Talmud understood the expiatory ceremony in question as intended to free the generation then present, not only from their own actual guilt, but from the guilt of former generations which was resting on them from the day that Israel departed out of Egypt. It was a ceremony performed not for the dead, but on behalf of the living.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Luckock and  
a typo-  
graphical  
error.

Dr. Luckock, on page 66 of the "new edition" of his work, comments on what he might well have perceived to have been merely a typographical error in the pamphlet (namely, "expanded" in place of "expounded"), in the words which precede the

<sup>1</sup> M. Israel Lévi's words are as follows: "Les rabbins du moyen âge ont cru découvrir un texte talmudique plus favorable à leur thèse. Il est conçu (*Sifré*, fin de la section *Schofetim*): Le Pentateuque déclare que lorsqu'un cadavre est trouvé dans la campagne et que l'assassin est inconnu, les anciens de la localité la plus rapprochée doivent immoler une génisse en disant: 'Pardonne à ton peuple que tu as sauvé.' Par les mots: 'Pardonne à ton peuple,' dit le *Sifré*, les anciens pensaient aux vivants, et par les mots: 'que tu as sauvé' aux défunts. 'Preuve, ajoute-t-il, que les morts ont besoin d'expiation. Aussi le meurtrier pêche-t-il jusqu'à ceux qui sortirent d'Égypte



citation from the *Siphre*. We have left the passage above as it appeared in our pamphlet with the correction of the typographical error. We admit that even thus corrected the statement is not expressed as precisely as it ought to have been. But no person could fairly say that we accused Dr. Luckock of adding anything to the quotation. The passage is a comment on Deut. xxi. 8, and the italic type was used (as is frequently done in such cases) to distinguish the Biblical text from the comment thereon. And as that explanation was endorsed by Dr. Luckock, no substantial injustice was done to him. The words of the *Siphre*, however, are no proof of the general practice of prayers for the dead in our Lord's day.

*Siphre*  
on Deut.  
xxi. 8.

(la responsabilité remonte jusqu'à cette génération).' Ainsi, cérémonie et prière *expiatoires*, voilà, en toutes lettres, le prototype de l'institution ultérieure des prières et des aumônes en faveur des défunts.

"Nous n'épilguerons pas sur le sens véritable de cette passage, qui n'a d'ailleurs pas la portée que lui ont assignée par la suite les casuistes. Qu'on lise *Horayot* 6 a. qui invoque justement ce texte du *Sifre*, et on verra que, d'après les docteurs du Talmud, cette cérémonie expiatoire n'est pas du tout célébrée pour le salut de défunts, mais uniquement pour celui des vivants. Le *Sifre*, d'après un de ces docteurs, veut simplement dire que la cérémonie expiatoire dégage la responsabilité de la génération présente, non seulement pour le crime actuel, mais pour ceux qui ont pu être commis par les générations antérieures 'jusqu'à celle qui sortit d'Égypte.'"—*Revue des Études Juives*, tome xxix. pp. 52-53.

## § 12. Modern Jewish Practice

Notes in  
the *Guardian*.

On the subject of modern Jewish practice, on which we can touch very slightly, we may again quote the remarks of the learned correspondent who wrote the literary "Notes," which appeared in the *Guardian*, November 14, 1894. Those "Notes" were quoted in our pamphlet, and we give them again as coming from an impartial source. A few remarks are added within brackets :—

"In an able essay, which will appear shortly in the *Révue des Études Juives*, by M. Israel Lévi,<sup>1</sup> with the title of *La Commémoration des âmes dans le Judaïsme*, this Rabbi shows that the passages in the Talmud and the Midrash quoted to the effect that the dead also want an atonement have been misunderstood by modern commentators. [See former section on p. 146.] One even quoted a Midrash which is, at present, lost. The Jewish funeral rite is very simple; it consists chiefly in giving alms and in saying prayers, of which the one called the קריש [the Kaddish, see § 7, p. 129] *sanctificat*, &c., forms part, as well as the commemo-

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<sup>1</sup> The article referred to in the above "Notes" appeared in the number of the *Révue* for Juillet-Septembre 1894, but the number had not come to hand when the "Notes" were written for the *Guardian*. The article was published before those "Notes" actually appeared in the columns of that paper. Professor Israel Lévi's article is the production of a great Jewish scholar, and a specialist of the first rank, and ought to put an end to all appeal to the Jewish practice of prayers for the dead as existing in the time of our Lord.

ration of the soul. If the former [that is, the practice of prayer for the dead] may be traced to the third century A.D., the latter [that is, the ceremony of offering up prayers publicly and on a special day for the deceased in general] cannot be found earlier than the twelfth century A.D., chiefly in the Prayer Books of the German rite. M. Lévi is of opinion that it [the day appointed for that special ceremony] was instituted after the great massacre by the Crusaders,<sup>1</sup> and that it was *simply an imitation of the Catholic Church* [the italics here are our own]. He rightly observes that the ceremony of the commemoration of the souls which is performed in the synagogues on feast days, and more especially on the Day of Atonement, was introduced into the Western synagogues, and there is no trace of it amongst the Jews who dwelt in the countries which were under the rule of Islâm. The prayer for the repose of the soul (השכבה) introduced in the Spanish rite is of later date than the commemoration."

These "Notes" give such an excellent summary of the article, and were evidently written by one who had an advance copy of that article before him, that we prefer still to quote them in their integrity.

The remarks of Dr. Luckock in the "new edition" (p. 64) might lead some to imagine that we had stated that the practice of prayers for the dead was introduced into Judaism from the Roman Catholic Church. The statement made, however,

Judaism  
and the  
R. C.  
Church.

<sup>1</sup> The massacres here alluded to took place in A.D. 1096 and 1196. See M. Lévi's article, p. 45.

was simply that the ceremony of the commemoration of souls was adopted by the Jews after the model of the Roman Catholic Church. What was stated, however, was, the Jewish ceremony of the commemoration of souls was introduced by the synagogue in imitation of the Christian practice. The practice among the Jews of offering up prayers privately for the dead was, no doubt, much earlier than the formal "commemoration" alluded to.

Jewish  
Liturgies.

That the Jews have for centuries offered up prayers for the dead is a fact which no one denies. Moreover, as in many similar instances when introductions into liturgical services are critically examined into, it is impossible to fix any precise date at which the practice began. The practice probably grew up by gradual stages. But it became at last so common, that it was generally regarded to be one of the institutions handed down by the Jewish Fathers.

If, however, that practice could be conclusively shown to have existed prior to the destruction of the Temple by the Romans, the conclusions drawn by the modern advocates of that practice in the Christian Church would not even then be proved

correct. For among the Jews in our Lord's day, and later, there grew up divers erroneous practices and doctrines. The Jewish doctrine concerning angels was by no means pure, nor was it justified by the teachings of the Law and the Prophets. Their ideas concerning amulets, charms, and magic in general, were opposed to the Old Testament revelation. Their theories concerning devils and evil spirits were sometimes ridiculous, and often opposed to the teaching of the Old Testament. Our Lord, as far as one can judge from the narratives of the Gospels, did not spend time in reproving those superstitious ideas. His silence on all those subjects, therefore, cannot be regarded as an approval of the traditions or practices of the Jewish nation. Yet that argument, confessedly inappropriate in other matters, is now generally made use of to justify the revival of superstitious practices among Christians. In the case of prayers for the dead, it has already been shown conclusively that there was no such practice known among the Jews in the days of our Lord or His Apostles.

Strange  
Jewish  
doctrines  
and prac-  
tices.

## CHAPTER V

### PARADISE AND GEHENNA

#### § 1. Jewish Ideas

Paradise  
a place of  
bliss.

OUR examination into the opinions as to a future state expressed in the Jewish writings of the ages before Christ, or those books composed in the period immediately succeeding, has tended to show that among the Jews the belief was universal that the souls of the righteous ascend or descend to a place of bliss, in which they are guarded by angels, and where they dwell in great peace and quiet; and in which the righteous are to continue until the day of resurrection. That place of blessing was supposed to be located in Sheol or Hades; but the abode of the righteous there was described as a place of light and comfort, and was, therefore, popularly termed the Garden of Eden, the Paradise of delight, or the Paradise of God. The Jews did not imagine Paradise to be a place of special training for

the righteous, in which the education of souls was hastened by pains and punishments. No doubt they were supposed to be improved by dwelling together in that place, and by converse with the angels, who are represented as instructing them concerning the secrets of the Most High. And further, it was maintained that a still more glorious condition awaited them at the day of resurrection. The idea, however, that the righteous in Paradise had to endure discipline, or to undergo pain and suffering, in order to atone for offences committed on earth, for which they had not in their lives sufficiently repented, was a thought which never seems to have crossed the mind of the ancient Jew.

Not of  
purgatorial  
training.

The Jewish thinkers of a later period added considerably to the sober expectations of the men of older times. Even in the Talmuds are found much rational and sober thoughts on the life that is to come. But commingled therewith are wild and extravagant statements, which show that the men of the later generations were not satisfied with the comparatively simple faith of an earlier day. The Talmuds contain much that is contradictory. Those works record the thoughts of

Talmuds  
contain  
contradictory  
state-  
ments.

many different centuries, and therefore contain statements and interpretations which seriously conflict with one another. In such works harmony cannot be expected to exist. And the Talmuds do not pretend to be harmonious. The Jews did not invent such a fable as "the unanimous consent of the Fathers."

Eisen-  
menger.

We do not propose to give here any sketch of modern Jewish thought upon the subject of the Intermediate state. Eisenmenger, in his *Entdecktes Judenthum*, 1711, has presented the dark and shady side of Jewish teaching on this as well as on other subjects. But it would be unfair to judge the Jews from those pages; and, moreover, we are fully conscious that as black a book as that of Eisenmenger might be written concerning the extravagancies of Christian thought and tradition, current in the very same period from which that scholar has culled his examples.<sup>1</sup>

It may be of interest to remember that if Christians had their Dantes and Miltons, who,

<sup>1</sup> Far more reliable works on the subject of Jewish thought and teaching are F. Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmud*, quellenmässig, systematisch u. gemeinverständlich dargestellt. Nach des Verfassers Tode herausgegeben von Franz Delitzsch u. Georg Schnedermann, Leipzig, 1880, and *Das Judenthum und die christliche Verkündigung in den Evangelien* von Georg Schnedermann, Leipzig, 1884.



after the example of Homer and Virgil, mapped out in their imaginations the regions of the Unseen, the Jews also divided the Paradise and Gehenna on the other side of the grave into various compartments, and even ventured to describe their exact length and breadth. The seven mansions of Paradise of those earthly dreamers were subdivided again into divers portions, according to the fancy of each Rabbi. Those dreamers, too, were bold enough to speak of souls ascending by degrees from the lower to the upper regions. But not even those thinkers, if we may judge from Eisenmenger's selections, imagined Paradise to be a place of corrective punishment.

Divisions  
of Para-  
dise.

The earlier Jewish thinkers, as already pointed out, considered Gehenna generally as a place for those souls that were lost without remedy. The later teachers held different views on the subject of that place of torment. Though they did not go so far as modern Christians have done, and did not attempt to turn Paradise into a purgatory, they regarded Gehenna, in the case of a large number of persons, as only a temporary place of punishment. Hence, instead of there being in Hades, or the Unseen, "a great gulf fixed" between "Abra-

Latin Jews  
considered  
Gehenna  
only tem-  
porary.

ham's bosom " and " the place of torment " (Luke xvi. 23-26) the division between Paradise and Gehenna was reduced to a wall, sometimes spoken of as only as thick as a handbreadth (see p. 143).

They even asserted that God had pronounced a .  
 A blessing of God pronounced upon Gehenna.  
 benediction on Gehenna (which was, according to their vain imaginations, included in the work of creation mentioned in Gen. i.), and that the reason why Gehenna was blessed was because persons might even be saved out of it. The latter theory was improved as the ages advanced, until Gehenna was at last, in the case of Israelites, considered to be a place of punishment for a year, or for even a shorter duration. Benevolent-minded Rabbis even considered that Gentiles might have only to endure seven years' punishment therein. The further idea that the condemned souls in Gehenna were set free from punishment once a week on the Sabbath days need not be more than mentioned.

Such flights of imagination cast light upon the statements alluded to elsewhere. They are illustrations of the large additions made by tradition to the doctrine of " the latter things," as set forth in the inspired books of the Old Testament, and expounded in the Jewish writings of earlier ages.

It would be an interesting question, but one which would demand careful inquiry to investigate, whether the Romish ideas concerning purgatory were directly or indirectly influenced by Jewish thought; or whether, on the other hand, the Jews were affected by the aftergrowth of Christian opinion, or whether they mutually affected each other.

Jewish and  
Christian  
thought.

The term Gehenna (γέεννα) is derived from Gehenna. Gehinnom (גֵּי הִינּוֹם), "the Valley of Hinnom," or "the Valley of the Son of Hinnom." That valley on the south side of Jerusalem is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. In that valley human sacrifices were offered to Moloch (2 Chron. xxviii. 3), and it was on that account defiled by King Josiah, in order to render it unfit for use as a place for these idolatrous rites (2 Kings xxiii. 10). The valley was a burial-place in the days of Jeremiah (Chap. vii. 32), and even prior to that time. It had been used even before Josiah's days as a burial-place, forasmuch as the Assyrians who died of the plague before Jerusalem, when Sennacherib advanced against Jerusalem, were buried in that locality (Isaiah xxx. 31-33). The valley was also known as *Topheth*, which means

Valley of  
Hinnom,  
a place of  
burial.

“a place of burning (the dead),” or “a place to be spit upon,” *i.e.* “abhorred.” On account of the reference made to it in the close of the Book of Isaiah (Chap. lxvi. 24), the name came to be used by the Jews as a designation of the future place of punishment of the wicked. It is, however, never found in the Old Testament in that signification; and Gehenna is not found in the Septuagint translation.<sup>1</sup>

## § 2. New Testament Revelations

Gehenna  
in N. T.

In the New Testament, however, Gehenna (γέεννα) repeatedly occurs in the sense of the place of the lost. It is thus used without any qualifying term in two places in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 29, 30), and in Matt. x. 28, xxiii. 15, Mark ix. 43, 45, 47, and Luke xii. 5. The “Gehenna of fire” (γέεννα τοῦ πυρός) occurs in Matt. v. 22, xviii. 21, and “a son of Gehenna” is spoken of in Matt. xxiii. 15. “A tongue set

<sup>1</sup> Those who desire to obtain further information may consult the article of Dr. M. Gaster in the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1893, pp. 571-611, on “Hebrew Visions of Hell and Paradise,” being translations from the Talmud, Midrashim, &c. Some of these are Pre-Christian; others are most probably as late as the third or fourth centuries after Christ.

on fire by Gehenna" (φλογιζομένη ὑπὸ τῆς γέεννης) is mentioned by St. James (iii. 6). The "judgment of Gehenna" is also referred to in Matt. xxiii. 33.

The place of the lost is spoken of in 2 Peter ii. 2 as *Tartarus* (ταρταρώσας), which was the common name used by the Greeks and Romans of the place of punishment after death. In the same passage "pits of darkness," or "chains of darkness," are mentioned (there are two different readings of the Greek in that passage). The equivalent expression used in the parallel passage in Jude, verse 6, is "everlasting bonds." In almost all these New Testament passages reference is made to a judgment to take place immediately after death, and prior to the judgment of the great day.

Tartarus in  
2 Peter.

The English reader of the Bible should observe that the meaning of "hell" in the Authorised Version is very ambiguous. For that English word is employed often in both the Old and New Testaments in places where the invisible world, or the place of departed spirits in general, is signified. Thus it is used in Job xxvi. 6, Psalm cxxxix. 8, Isaiah xiv. 9, Ezekiel xxxi. 17, xxxii. 21, and in

Word  
"hell" am-  
biguous.

Matt. xi. 23, and other places. In the last passage quoted, where it is said of the city of Capernaum, "Thou shalt be cast down to hell," the signification is: "thou shalt be utterly destroyed." See also Rev. i. 18, xx. 13-14. See note on "the gates of hell," or of the Unseen, on p. 292. The expression "hell" (Heb. Sheol) is also employed in the Authorised Version in the sense of the *grave*. So Ps. ix. 17, lv. 15; compare Num. xvi. 30-33, where it is translated by "the pit." The word is further employed as a translation of *Gehenna* in the passages mentioned above, and in those passages it means the place of the lost. There is no distinct name given to the place of lost souls in any book of the Old Testament.

Paradise  
found in  
three  
places in  
N. T.

On the other hand, the word Paradise occurs in the New Testament only in three passages: Firstly, in Luke xxiii. 43, where our Lord's words on the cross, addressed to the penitent thief, are recorded: "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." In that passage the expression is used unmistakably of the resting-place of the blessed in the Unseen World.

2 Cor. xii. 4. The second passage in which Paradise is mentioned is 2 Cor. xii. 4, where Paul states that he

was himself "caught up into Paradise." The Greek verb *ἡρπάγη* does not, however, convey the same idea which an English reader might derive from the expression "caught up," which in reality means no more than "caught away," "snatched away." But the expression used in the verse preceding, "caught up to the third heaven" (*ἄρπαγέντα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ*), justifies the translation "caught up." For "the third heaven" is a parallel expression for "Paradise," notwithstanding Methodius' attempt in his discourse on the Resurrection (about A.D. 300) to make out that St. Paul had two revelations and two distinct raptures. Against Methodius' view might be put the earlier exegesis of Tertullian (*De Anima*), who attempts to distinguish Paradise completely from the resting-place of the saints in Hades. Paradise, according to Tertullian, was an upper region where the souls of the martyrs were permitted to enter immediately after death. Tertullian, however, like Dr. Littledale, maintained that in the resting-place in Hades the souls of other righteous men undergo "compensatory discipline." The Apostle, however, does not indicate such an idea. It was an

Paradise  
and the  
third  
heaven.

“after-thought” of the Church Father, and no improvement on the revelation made in Scripture. With the Apostle, “Paradise” and “the third heaven” were names for places of rest and glory, and not places of purgatorial punishment or compensatory discipline.

St. Paul’s idea of “Paradise” was very different from that propounded by the fiery Church Father. The apostle’s view was no doubt the same as that in Rev. ii. 7, which is the third and last passage in which the word occurs in the New Testament. There the Spirit says to the Churches, “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.”

Paradise in  
the Septua-  
gint.

It is scarcely necessary to remind our readers that the word Paradise is frequently employed in the Old Greek or Septuagint translation of the Book of Genesis, chapters i. and ii. The Garden of Eden was certainly a place of delight and enjoyment. The word Paradise occurs in the Septuagint in passages of the later books and prophets as a suitable rendering for “garden,” with an under reference to the story of Genesis. So in Ezekiel xxviii. 13, xxxi. 8, 9. It occurs in the sense of garden also in the story of



Susanna, included in the LXX. translation of Daniel. In Hebrew עֵדֶן or Paradise, is found only in Cant. iv. 13, Eccles. ii. 5, and Neh. ii. 8. It is unnecessary to discuss the origin or derivation of that Hebrew word; but enough has been said to show that the term is always found in the signification of a place of ease and delight, and cannot be interpreted in any other sense.

It was long after the Babylonian captivity that the Jews began to employ the term as a name of the abode of the blessed. That, as already noticed, is the meaning of the word in the three passages of the New Testament in which it is found. Later usage.

With St. Paul's language before us, it is therefore quite defensible to speak of "heaven" as an equivalent for "Paradise"; provided only that it be borne in mind that the final abode of the people of God is not spoken of as opened until the King, seated on the throne of glory, shall say, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. xxv. 34). Heaven and Paradise.

Of the locality of Paradise we know nothing.

Locality of  
Paradise.

Upwards and downwards are expressions necessary to be used in the infancy of man's knowledge. All attempts, like that of the learned George Stanley Faber in his interesting treatise on the "Many Mansions in the House of the Father," to explain literally the expressions used in the Scriptures, are vain; for we are not justified in drawing fanciful pictures of Paradise and Gehenna as situated in the centre of the earth.

Dives and  
Lazarus.

The parable of our Lord concerning the rich man and Lazarus in Hades, or the Unseen (Luke xvi. 19-31), must be briefly noticed. To assume that that which is professedly a parable provides us with an exact description of the future state is to go beyond the just limits of exegesis. Our Lord, in condescension to Jewish ideas, pictured Lazarus as reclining at the Banquet (see p. 139), nearest to the father of the faithful, the great Abraham. On earth the rich man had enjoyed many banquets, while the miserable beggar at his gate often gazed longingly on them, desiring in vain to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. The banquets on earth are contrasted with "the banquet," at which Abraham is represented as consoling Lazarus in his bosom, while

the rich man from afar, "in torment," had in turn to gaze at the scene, unable even to obtain a drop of water to cool his anguished tongue. The picture no doubt represents an awful reality, and a reality depicted in such a manner as to come forcibly home to the minds of the people who listened to the story, and fully comprehended its meaning. We have, however, no right to draw from the parable the conclusion that the wicked will everlastingly behold the blessedness of the righteous, or that the righteous will eternally gaze upon the torments of the ungodly.

The moral of the parable is clear. The great gulf fixed between the resting-place of the godly and the abode of the ungodly was intended to point out the hopelessness of salvation beyond the grave. The discourse between Abraham and the rich man abounds with points of warning. Surely if prayers for the dead could have helped a lost soul, or benefited a saved soul, our Lord would, in such a terrible parable, have said something on that point. The silence of the Great Master has a voice of warning which ought to be listened to until He comes again!

Moral  
of the  
parable.

In the discussion of such questions we are, for

Language  
of the  
Revela-  
tion.

obvious reasons, averse to putting too much stress on the descriptions given in the Book of the Revelation. The language of that book is drawn to a large extent from the prophets of the Old Testament, and its language ought to be explained in accordance with their writings. That book, however, affords some glimpses not merely of the final blessedness of the righteous, and of the condemnation of the ungodly, but also of the rewards and punishments in the Intermediate state. The description of the final abode of the righteous and their state therein is reserved for the closing chapters (xxi. and xxii.). But even those chapters are reticent as to details. The final punishment of the ungodly is only glanced at in the curt but terrific pictures of Chap. xx. 13-15.

Inter-  
mediate  
state there  
described.

The rest and blessedness of the Intermediate state appears to be portrayed in Rev. vii. The passage in Rev. vi. 9-11, as will be pointed out in next chapter, does not describe the state of the righteous martyrs in Paradise. But Rev. vii. gives some account first of the ransomed Church of Israel and then of the Gentile Church composed of all nations—the two flocks of the Great Shepherd.

The picture of intermediate glory there presented is only a foretaste of the final bliss. Small points of difference ought not to be unduly pressed. For whether significant or not, there are some remarkable variations between Rev. vii. 15, and Rev. xxi. 22. The perfect Paradise into which the "perfected" souls have been already brought by Christ seems glanced at in Rev. vii. and possibly in Rev. xiv. 12, 13. The place of punishment in the Intermediate state is spoken of in Rev. xiv.

10, 11. That description should be read in connection with Chap. xix. 20, and xx. 10, remembering as we read those passages that "the beast" and "the false prophet" are not individuals but symbolical personages. The language of those passages is to be explained in accordance with Old Testament language. Hence it must not be explained literally, after the analogies of the Book of Enoch, and Fourth Esdras. The Church Fathers and the Puritan writers were, therefore, not justified in the deductions they drew from those passages which they regarded as literal descriptions. The passages are figurative pictures of some punishment in the Intermediate state, the details of which are not to be filled

The beast  
and the  
false  
prophet.

in by the fancy of theologians of any school of thought.

“Spirits in prison.”

In Chap. VI. § 7, in which we shall discuss the difficult passages found in the First Epistle of Peter, we shall have to speak briefly of the “spirits in prison.” But here it may be necessary, in order to complete our statement of the New Testament passages which speak of the punishment of the ungodly in the Intermediate state, to notice that the expression “spirits in prison” is based upon the remarkable description in Isa. xxiv. 21, 22.<sup>1</sup> The spirits referred to by Peter were the antediluvian rebels whose character for notorious wickedness is set forth in Gen. vi. 1–5, 11–13. We repudiate the persistent attempts made to transform the simple narrative of the Book of Genesis into a legendary story of the loves of angels and women. Great scholars have, indeed, adopted that interpretation; and many of the Fathers of the Church, led away by the narratives of the Book of Enoch, may be cited in favour of that exposition. We maintain as strongly as ever that that exposition has no real support in Scripture.<sup>2</sup> The legend may be based upon

<sup>1</sup> See our “Biblical Essays,” pp. 167 ff., where we have discussed that passage in full. See note 2, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> In our work on “The Fatherhood of God and its relation to the

the Scripture, but the Scripture does not really support the legend. The narrative in Genesis is no Babylonian myth; and consequently we maintain that no creature can bestow upon himself powers not given him by the Almighty. If angels, therefore, were not intended to multiply their kind by procreation, they can have had no fleshly desires implanted in them like those implanted by nature in the sons of men. The Book of Enoch shows how the legend-monger revels in the description of the manner in which the fallen angels prepared themselves for their work of sin, and how they accomplished the act of transgression.

What we briefly desire to note here is that the punishment of those transgressors is distinctly alluded to in 2 Pet. ii. 4 and Jude 6. The angels there spoken of are the "sons of God" of Gen. vi. That phrase is used in the Old Testament of the professors of religion, and such is probably the true meaning of "the sons of God" mentioned in the Book of Job." <sup>1</sup>

Explained  
in 2 Peter  
and Jude.

Person and Work of Christ and the Operation of the Holy Spirit." Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867. The Appendix on the Intermediate state in that work requires, however, to be largely corrected by our later "Biblical Essays."

<sup>1</sup> See the Essay on the Book of Job in our "Biblical Essays." We have called attention there to the fact that the individual sinners

It is sufficient for our present purpose merely to indicate those passages. We cannot turn aside to examine their meaning, and must refer to our "Biblical Essays" where those subjects will be found noticed, perhaps, at sufficient length.

referred to and spoken of are already mentioned (see p. 159), as in Tartarus, in "pits of darkness," and bound in "chains of darkness." That is the Gehenna of the Intermediate state, the prison (whether modified or not we care not to discuss) where Satan will be, or has been "for a season," bound (Rev. xx. 1-3), though now he roams about with his fellows until the judgment of the Great Day.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGES APPEALED TO BY THOSE WHO UPHOLD PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

#### § I. Introductory

IN our opening chapter a sketch was given of the passages in the Old Testament which speak directly or indirectly of a life after death. Attention was there called to the fact that no instance can be cited in which any of the Patriarchs, Prophets, or Psalmists offered up petitions on behalf of the dead. We noted, however, that an attempt has been made to utilise in the present controversy some Old Testament passages by bringing them into connection with certain statements of the New Testament.

Old and  
New  
Testa-  
ments.

The silence of the New Testament on the subject is as remarkable as that of the Old. Neither the Gospels nor the Acts furnish us with a single instance of prayers for the dead.

Silence of  
New.

Nowhere is there even a recommendation to offer up such petitions. The Epistles and the Book of Revelation are equally silent on the matter. The pious wish or prayer of St. Paul for Onesiphorus does not (as we shall see later) form any exception to the silence of Holy Writ on the point. (See p. 187 *ff.*)

Passages  
unfairly  
quoted.

But although no example of such a petition has or can be cited by theologians or writers on the other side, there are a number of passages in the New Testament which have been pressed, as we maintain unfairly, into the controversy. Those passages must now come under review.

## § 2. "The World to come"

—MATT. xii. 32

The heal-  
ing of the  
deaf and  
dumb.

The Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke record the miracle by which our Lord healed one who was possessed with a demon, and who was both blind and dumb (Matt. xii. 22 *ff.*, Luke xi. 14 *ff.*). The people who were eye-witnesses of that miracle were amazed at the manifestation of Divine power, and expressed loudly their conviction that Jesus was the Son of David. But

when the Pharisees, who do not seem to have been present when the wonder of healing was performed, heard (Matt. xii. 24) of the miracle and of its effect on the people, they exclaimed: "This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." Thus the Pharisees do not seem to have questioned the reality of the occurrence, or to have disputed the wonderful display of supernatural power, but they insisted that the healing that had been performed was due directly to the power of Satan. The miracle is not recorded by St. Mark, although that evangelist records what took place afterwards, namely, that "the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth He out devils" (Mark iii. 22).

Thus did the Pharisees exhibit a settled determination to reject the claims of Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of David who had come to redeem Israel. It was that fixed pre-determination to resist all evidence which God might be pleased to bestow which constituted that sin against the Holy Spirit, of which, as the three evangelists testify, Christ spoke in such solemn

Settled  
determina-  
tion of the  
Pharisees.

terms on that occasion, and on that occasion only. It cannot be too often insisted on that the passages cited are the only passages in which "the sin against the Holy Ghost" is distinctly spoken of in Scripture. Whatever be the special meaning of the passages in Heb. vi. 4-8 and Heb. x. 26-31, those latter passages ought, we maintain, to be treated quite apart from those in the Gospel of St. Matthew and St. Mark. For the passages in the Gospels and those in the Epistles refer to a very different type of sin.<sup>1</sup>

If the facts noticed be duly borne in mind, it is easy to understand the meaning of our Lord's words of warning addressed to the Pharisees. For our Lord, after pointing out the absurdity of the idea

<sup>1</sup> As one engaged for many years in practical work and in daily house-to-house visiting, we know the comfort which we have been enabled to impart to others by grasping this fundamental truth of exegesis, namely, that when our Lord spoke of the sin against the Holy Ghost He spoke of a sin which cannot now be committed. For miracles have ceased, and ocular demonstration of the powers of the Messianic Age is not now vouchsafed to men. Of course there are differences of opinion on this as well as on other subjects, but this seems to us to be the plain teaching of the Scriptures. There will be, no doubt, in the Great Day much sin left unpardoned and iniquity unforgiven, but in the present day of grace no one can be said to be "sealed up" for everlasting damnation because of acts or thoughts of which he has been guilty. "Able to save to the uttermost" (Heb. vii. 25) is a glorious truth which the minister of the Gospel is empowered to make known to all who are willing to come unto God through Christ Jesus.

that Satan would cast out Satan, added : "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto man [St. Mark adds : "and blasphemies wherewith soever they may blaspheme "], but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come (*οὔτε ἐν τούτῳ τῷ αἰῶνι οὔτε ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι*)."

The last sentence is peculiar to St. Matthew's Gospel, and occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. St. Mark's version is : "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation : because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." St. Luke's statement of our Lord's speech on that occasion omits all mention of the "sin against the Holy Ghost."

Sin against  
the Holy  
Ghost.

Now if it could be proved that the Jews at the time of our Lord believed that sins would be pardoned after death, there might be some reason to conclude that our Lord's words should be understood in accordance with such a belief. But

our examination into Jewish beliefs before Christ has shown that the very reverse may be truthfully asserted. Hence that interpretation of our Lord's words is far from being the "natural conclusion." For it cannot be denied that the expressions "this world" and "the world to come" in Jewish popular phraseology were respectively employed to signify the times prior to the Messiah and the times of the Messiah. It was believed that the Messiah would introduce a new era, an era termed in Biblical language "the time of reformation" (Heb. ix. 10). Many passages might be quoted from John Lightfoot's *Horæ Hebraicæ* as illustrations of that usage.

"The world to come."

Passages in Hebrews.

It is, moreover, almost equally certain that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews makes use of phraseology similar to that in St. Matthew's Gospel. In Chapter ii. 5 of that Epistle, at the close of a comparison between the old dispensation in which "angels" had occupied a more conspicuous position to the eye of sense than was accorded to them under the New Dispensation, the writer of the Epistle remarks: "For not unto angels did he put in subjection (Authorised Version) the world to come (τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν) whereof

we speak," or "are speaking" (Heb. ii. 5). In Heb. vi. 5 the writer employs the same expression used in Matt. xii.; for he speaks of the falling away of some who had tasted the good word of God and "the powers of the age (or world, A. V.) to come (*μέλλοντος αἰῶνος*). By the powers of the world to come the Apostle means that manifestation of wonderful gifts and powers which were characteristic of the opening days of the Christian dispensation.

With such Biblical usage before us, and bearing in mind the facts already mentioned, no array of names of distinguished commentators would justify us in putting the interpretation on our Lord's words which explains them to signify that "while some sins are forgiven in the lifetime of the sinner, there are others which admit of forgiveness after his death" (Luckock's "After Death," p. 67). The latter interpretation of the text is based upon an unproved assumption.

Biblical  
usage.

### § 3. "The Fire of the Day of the Lord"

—I COR. iii. 12-15

St. Paul writes here as follows: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is

M

The fire of  
the day of  
the Lord.

laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if any man buildeth on this foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble ; each man's work shall be made manifest : for the day shall declare it, because it [the day of the Lord] is revealed by fire ; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss ; but he himself shall be saved ; yet so as through fire"—Revised Version.

Romish  
explana-  
tion.

The Romanist theologians maintain that St. Paul means here that the work of that man will abide who is entirely freed from sin, having died in a perfect state of grace. But that for all others the fire of purgatory must be undergone, and that fire is here spoken of by the Apostle.

It is plain, however, that the fire to which the Apostle alludes is the fire which will accompany Christ's second coming to judgment. Of it St. Paul, in 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, says: "And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." In



1 Cor. he speaks of the fire of the day of the Lord proving or testing "each man's work," and not merely the work which is done by those who are only partially righteous. Consequently a purgatory such as is taught by the Church of Rome cannot be meant. The Apostle as shown by the context is speaking of the work done by ministers of the Gospel; whose converts, if any, shall be seen in that day, and who then will be a joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of Jesus Christ. If, however, those labourers for Christ have spent their strength in folly, and in setting forth false doctrines, building on the true foundation, but building "hay, stubble," &c.—if thus they possess no seals to their ministry (1 Cor. ix. 2), their work will be consumed, and be proved to have been no real work, even though they themselves may, as individuals, be found among the saved.

The day of judgment the testing-day.

The text in question was grossly misunderstood by the Fathers. Departing, under the influence of the heathen poets, from the strict interpretation of the passage, they turned aside into strange paths of exposition. Thus Lactantius (died 325) writes, "Divine Institutes," Book VII. chapter

Lactantius' exegesis.

xxi. (we quote from Fletcher's translation in Clark's Ante-Nicene Library), "When He (God) shall have judged the righteous, He will even examine them by fire. Then they whose sins shall exceed either in weight or in number, shall be scorched by the fire and burnt; but they whom full justice and maturity of virtue has imbued will not perceive that fire; for they have something of God in themselves which repels and rejects the violence of the flame. So great is the force of innocence, that the flame shrinks from it without doing harm; which has received from God this power, that it burns the wicked, and is under the command of the righteous. Nor, however, let any one imagine that souls are immediately judged after death. For all are detained in one and a common place of confinement until the arrival of the time in which the great Judge shall make an investigation of their deserts."

Opposed to  
Scripture.

Lactantius' views are entirely opposed to the Scripture revelations concerning "paradise" (see Chap. V.), while his exegesis is partly based on a literal exposition of Matt. iii. 11 and Mark ix. 49.

We conclude this section with a short quotation

from Ambrose on the Psalms, quoted by Archbishop Ussher ("Answer to a Jesuit," p. 235):— Ambrose's interpretation.

"With fire shall the sons of Levi be purged [Mal. iii. 2], with fire Ezekiel, with fire Daniel. But these, although they shall be tried with fire, shall say, 'We have passed through fire and water' [Ps. lxvi. 12]. Others shall remain in the fire." On Ps. xxxvi., "And if the Lord shall save His servants, we shall be saved by faith, yet saved as it were by fire. Although we shall not be burned up, yet shall we be burned. After the end of the world, when the angels shall be sent to separate the good and the bad, this baptism shall be; when iniquity shall be burnt up by the furnace of fire, that in the kingdom of God the righteous man shines as the sun in the kingdom of their Father [Matt. xiii. 43]. And if any one be as Peter, or as John, he is baptized with this fire." Seeing, therefore, "he that is purged here hath need to be purged again there, let him purge us there also, when the Lord may say: Enter into my rest, that every one of us being burned with that flaming sword [Gen. iii. 24], not burned up, when he is entered into that pleasure of Paradise, may give thanks unto his Lord, saying: Thou hast brought us into a place of refreshment."

The reader will perceive that Ambrose (Bp. A.D. 374-97), however wrong his interpretation may be, does not teach a purgatorial fire in the Intermediate state, but speaks of a fire through which all believers, even the best, like Peter, John, &c., have to pass in the day of judgment.

## § 4. "Baptized for the Dead"

—I COR. xv. 29

I Cor. xv.  
29 uncon-  
nected  
with the  
contro-  
versy.

In all serious controversy about matters of religion it is wise to abstain from adducing passages as proof-texts which are in themselves confessedly obscure. No such passage as that in I Cor. xv. 29 ought to be adduced in this controversy. It runs: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead? If the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptized for them?" Tertullian, we believe, is the only Church Father of those who lived prior to the Council of Nice (A.D. 325) who refers to this passage, and the information which Tertullian affords on the subject is by no means satisfactory. Notwithstanding the plausibility with which Dean Stanley has descanted on the text in his commentary on the Epistles to the Corinthians, the passage cannot fairly be adduced, as Dr. Luckock has done, "as historical evidence that in the earliest times death was not supposed to place an impassable barrier between the good offices of the living in behalf of the souls of the dead" ("After Death," p. 77).

Tertullian alludes twice to the passage, first in his tract "*De Resurrectione Carnis*," chapter xlviii., and secondly in his "Treatise against Marcion," chapter v. 10 (A.D. 207). In the first he says: "Inasmuch as some are also baptized for the dead, we will see whether there be a good reason for this. Now it is certain that they adopted this (practice) with such a presumption, as made them suppose that the vicarious baptism would be beneficial to the flesh of another in anticipation of the resurrection; for unless it were a bodily (resurrection), there would be no pledge secured by this process of a corporeal baptism. 'Why are they then baptized for the dead?' Unless the bodies rise again which are thus baptized? For it is not the soul which is sanctified by the baptismal bath: its sanctification comes from the answer."

Tertullian  
on baptism  
for the  
dead.

Vicarious  
baptism  
for the  
body.

In the other passage Tertullian cites the text against Marcion, who denied the resurrection of the flesh as a proof of that resurrection. Tertullian distinctly expresses disapproval of the practice itself. He says there that the Apostle's aim in alluding to it was "that he might all the more firmly insist upon the resurrection of the body in

Tertullian,  
Against  
Marcion.

proportion as they who were vainly baptized for the dead resorted to the practice from their belief of such a resurrection.”<sup>1</sup>

His statement incomplete.

Tertullian's statement is far from complete, even assuming the correctness of his interpretation of St. Paul's words. He does not inform us whether the persons vicariously baptized for the dead had been previously baptized on their own behalf. The fact of the double baptism might in the latter case have been a serious difficulty. Tertullian also seems to argue that the object of the special rite was to secure the resurrection for the bodies of those on whose behalf the rite was performed. No inconsiderable number of assumptions are necessary before any such vain rite can be utilised as "historical evidence" with the object of proving that the Corinthian Christians imagined that something could be done to help souls after death.

It is quite possible, however, to interpret the vicarious baptism performed at Corinth in a sense which might avoid such difficulties. Of course

<sup>1</sup> We have here cited the translation given in the Ante-Nicene Library of the Fathers, published by Messrs. T. & T. Clark of Edinburgh.

we can have no certainty that the interpretation is correct, simply because there is no other reference to the matter to be found in the early Fathers; and the writings of Fathers who lived in later ages are not satisfactory "historical evidence" on any such point.

No light  
from con-  
temporary  
writers.

It is not, however, improbable that there may have been a custom that when death removed from the ranks of the church in Corinth any of its conspicuous members, to regard the next convert admitted into the fellowship of Christ's communion as filling up the gap caused by death, and that the new convert received the baptismal name of the deceased, and was thus "baptized for the dead." Such a baptism would be in itself a sign of a strong faith in the resurrection, and of a conviction that those who were gone were regarded as "not lost, but gone before." We cannot, in the absence of all evidence, press even that interpretation, although it is a very possible interpretation of the Apostle's words.

What the  
vicarious  
baptism  
may mean.

It should be observed that the Apostle does not suggest the idea of any advantage accruing to the deceased by the baptism of others in their

Baptism  
for the  
dead a  
mockery if  
there were  
no resur-  
rection.

stead, or in their room. He alludes only to the persons who were baptized on account of the dead; and asks, with reference to the living, what would they do if the very reason on account of which they were so baptized were proved false and untrue? That solemn rite would be mere mockery, unless they believed that they who had gone hence were still living, and awaiting in another world the blissful resurrection. It was the thought of the loss on the part of those then alive that constrained the Apostle to refer to his own particular circumstances, and to exclaim: "And why stand we in jeopardy (exposed to all sorts of dangers) every hour?" St. Paul could not have written thus had the thought of any loss on the part of the dead presented itself to his mind. Hence we reject as untenable the notion that the text in 1 Cor. xv. 29 is any evidence that a benefit may be conferred on the dead by means of the intervention of the living.

It lies beyond our special object to attempt to give a summary of other interpretations of the passage. The passage is in itself too obscure to be brought forward in the controversy. In the absence of all contemporaneous history which



can cast light upon the allusion of St. Paul the difficulties connected with its interpretation cannot be wholly removed. But in any case it has no bearing on our subject.

### § 5. St. Paul's Prayer for Onesiphorus

—2 TIM. i. 16

The next text commonly adduced is St. Paul's prayer for Onesiphorus (2 Tim. i. 16-18). "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well." We quote the Authorised Version, because it is almost the same in this passage as the Revised Version. Among the salutations at the close of the same Epistle (2 Tim. iv. 19) is: "Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus." From the latter text the conclusion is drawn that Onesiphorus must have been dead when St. Paul wrote the letter to Timothy.

The prayer  
for One-  
siphorus.

Chrysos-  
tom.

The Ancient Church, however, drew no such inference; the conclusion in question is but an "after-thought" of a far later age. That Onesiphorus was alive is the judgment passed by such "tradition" as is extant. St. Chrysostom states that Onesiphorus was at the time at Rome.<sup>1</sup> Fabricius cites a tradition that, years afterwards, Onesiphorus became a Bishop of Corone, in Messenia.

The con-  
text.

The context of the passage in which this "prayer" occurs may cast some light upon the reasons which led St. Paul to offer up the petition. For in the preceding verses St. Paul exhorts Timothy to firmness and fidelity, reminding him that he knew that "all they which are in Asia be turned away from me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes" (verse 15). The Apostle then refers to Onesiphorus and his house,

<sup>1</sup> In his Homily iii. on 2 Tim. i. 13-18, Chrysostom says: "Observe too that he says, 'The Lord grant him mercy.' For as he himself had obtained mercy from Onesiphorus, so he wished him to obtain the same from God. MORAL. And if Onesiphorus, who exposed himself to danger, is saved by mercy, much more are we also saved by the same." In Homily x., commenting on 2 Tim. iv. 19, Chrysostom says: "For he was then in Rome, of whom he said, 'The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.' By this naming of him, he makes those of his household also more zealous in such good actions."—"The Oxford Translation," edited by Dr. Schaff.

and resuming the exhortation to Timothy, adds further: "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

The "natural" conclusion, therefore, to put upon the passage is that Onesiphorus, at the time at which the Apostle wrote, was among those who had "forsaken him," like Demas, under the influence of some misunderstanding, by reason of some sin, or, perhaps, beguiled by some false teachers. Many earnest followers of the Apostle left his side, at least for a season, in the course of his missionary experiences. The names of Mark and of Barnabas, and of others, mentioned in the Epistles, at once occur to one's mind. The weakness and infirmities of good men are often recorded in Scripture. If loving converts at Corinth and among the churches of the Galatians were led astray by the devices of false teachers, what is so strange in the idea that Onesiphorus may also, for a season, have been detached from St. Paul? The unselfishness and, perhaps, reckless daring of St. Paul made it hard to keep up with him as he pressed onward in the steps of his Great Master. But if some temporary falling away, or some temporary misunderstanding at this

The  
"natural"  
interpreta-  
tion.

period separated Onesiphorus from Paul, the latter did not forget the noble works which Onesiphorus had performed in days gone by; and, therefore, while he gently hints at the grief caused by the desertion of a friend so valiant and devoted, he prays that he might obtain mercy of the Lord in the Great Day.

“House-  
hold of  
Onesiphorus.”

That the family of Onesiphorus were not involved in the defection of their head appears probable from the salutation at the close of the Epistle. But it should be carefully observed that the mention of “the house of Onesiphorus” in that salutation, without any special mention of Onesiphorus, is no proof whatever that Onesiphorus was not included in that greeting. There is a remarkable parallel which can be cited (and it is the only parallel in the New Testament) in the mention made of “the household of Stephanas” (τὸν Στεφανᾶ οἶκον) in 1 Cor. i. 16. The household of Stephanas corresponds to the house of Onesiphorus (τῷ Ὀνησιφόρου οἴκῳ) of 2 Tim. i. 16 and iv. 19, and that “household” is mentioned under an equivalent expression (τὴν οἰκίαν Στεφανᾶ) in 1 Cor. xvi. 15. But Stephanas was certainly included in the “house” or “house-

hold" mentioned in those passages, and he is mentioned in 1 Cor. xvi. 17 as alive and with St. Paul. The utmost, therefore, that can be asserted from a comparison of the two passages (2 Tim. i. 16 and 2 Tim. iv. 19) is that it may be probable that Onesiphorus may have been absent from his family at the time when St. Paul sent the greeting inserted at the close of the Second Epistle to Timothy.

Whatever, therefore, theologians desirous of restoring mediæval practices may choose to assert, or reassert, concerning St. Paul's prayer for Onesiphorus as a clear instance of prayers for the dead, the passage in question does not afford a particle of proof that the prayer for Onesiphorus was a prayer for a dead man. Hence the "castle of cards" erected on that text falls to the ground.

No prayer  
for a dead  
man.

### § 6. Dr. Littledale's List of Passages

The late Dr. R. F. Littledale, in a four-paged leaflet (London: G. J. Palmer & Sons), gives a useful summary of the arguments adduced in favour of "prayers for the dead." Dr. Littledale's array of texts has led superficial readers to

Little-  
dale's  
tract.

imagine that there is a good deal on the subject discoverable in Holy Scripture. An examination of the texts cited will, however, lead to quite the opposite conclusion. The majority of the texts Dr. Littledale refers to have little or no bearing whatever upon the question at issue. Theologians of various schools of thought have generally maintained that the state of the departed described in Scripture is "one of waking consciousness." The recognition of that truth, however, does not necessarily lead up to the admission of the duty of "prayers for the dead." On the contrary, if it were true that such prayers could be in any way beneficial to the departed, it would be natural to look for some intimation to that effect in the writings of the inspired writers of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

Imperfect  
souls.

The state of the saints in Sheol (or the *Underworld*) prior to the coming of Christ was, no doubt, according to the New Testament (Heb. xi. 40), a state of imperfection. But there is no passage in existence to show that such imperfection implied penal or purgatorial pain. Although the state of souls in Hades (the Unseen) was one of imperfection, no inspired prophet or psalmist

ever recommended believers to intercede with God on behalf of such imperfect souls. Dr. Littledale refers to Heb. xi. 40, to prove that believers who died before Christ were in an imperfect condition. But he omits to notice that the Epistle to the Hebrews, in a subsequent passage, speaks of those souls, after Christ's work on the cross, as "the spirits of men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23). In recounting the glories of which through Christ persons are made partakers, the Apostle terms the Church of Christ "Mount Zion," "the City of the Living God," "the Heavenly Jerusalem." He further affirms that the saints of the old dispensation are not now "apart from us (*χωρὶς ἡμῶν*)" Heb. xi. 40. He emphatically informs the Jewish Christians "ye are come (*προσελήλυθατε*) to the spirits of just men made perfect."

"Those spirits of just men made perfect" are not a class distinct from the Christians who "sleep in Jesus," and, therefore, St. Paul speaks (Phil. ii. 10), of prayer being offered up in the name of Jesus by those in heaven (angels), those on earth (saints yet "in the flesh"), and those under the earth (saints buried, and in Paradise). All those three classes are in communion and fellowship

Spirits of  
just men  
made perfect.

N

with one another, and with God and His Christ, a "communion" the full import of which those on earth cannot yet realise. And all those three classes are spoken of in Heb. xii. 22-24, as being in communion with one another.

Education  
in holiness.

In noticing Dr. Littledale's tract, it should be observed that few are disposed to question the possibility of believers being more fully trained, or "educated" in holiness, in the life beyond the grave. But that idea must be set forth in such a shape as not to conflict with the statement, "there is no condemnation (κατακρίμα) to those that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1). No "satisfaction" can be rendered to God in the life to come for transgressions committed on earth. The believer is justified and "counted righteous before God" only for Christ's sake; and when once he has accepted God's free gift of eternal life through Christ, he is "complete in Him." It is impossible on earth to ascertain how far the work of spiritual education or sanctification may have progressed in any soul. If we were able to understand the state of the spirit-soul when it has cast off the "earthly tabernacle" with which it is now burdened (2 Cor. v. 4), and pressed



down—if we could comprehend the state of the soul when all the desires of the body for self and for others shall have been brought to an end—it might, perhaps, be possible to understand something of the progress made in this life in “sanctification” and in inward holiness.

In the great day when Christ shall appear for judgment, it is natural to conjecture that a number of believers may be in that imperfect state of holiness which the theologians of a certain school are so fond of imagining. The “education” of those individuals must in that case be supposed to develop rapidly, if they are to be fitted to enter the regions of bliss. The difficulty of which some theologians write so much is not, therefore, solved by any theory of a “purgatory” after death. The subject is one of those points on which no light has been vouchsafed. Moses long ago remarked, “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever” (Deut. xxix. 29).

Difficulty  
not solved  
by a purga-  
tory.

The notion of praying for the growth of grace of saints in Paradise is, in our age at least, a hollow pretence. The real object sought to be

Object of  
prayers for  
dead.

attained by prayers for the dead is the ultimate salvation of that large class of persons whom it is hard to conceive as hopelessly lost, but of whom we dare not affirm that they have fallen asleep in Jesus. The "larger hope," which has now taken a strong hold of popular imagination, is that which induces many to look with sympathy on "prayers for the dead."

Salvation  
after death  
not re-  
vealed.

No full light has been afforded in Scripture on such a subject. But when we remember what was the current Jewish belief before Christ, and in the days of our Lord, when we call to mind the Lord's own teaching concerning the broad and narrow way (Matt. vii. 13, 14), it appears that more passages can be adduced in favour of there being no salvation after death, than on the opposite side. If, however, the figurative language of the Hebrew prophets be remembered, we may perhaps hope that there may be a grander display of mercy than we now can venture to speak of. What God may do we know not now, for He has not vouchsafed any revelation on the subject. Meanwhile our duty as interpreters of Scripture is not to intrude into those things we have not seen, vainly puffed up by our

fleshly mind (Col. ii. 18), but calmly to go as far as Scripture reveals, and no farther. Whether there may be a display of mercy in the world beyond the grave, we know not; but we do know that Scripture does not give the slightest warrant for prayers for the dead. Nor does it encourage men to expect that salvation in another state which they have wilfully refused when on this side of the grave.

Dr. Littledale, however, boldly asserts that "the Holy Scriptures tell us of temporary punishment after death." In the earlier works of Anglican divines, who have written in favour of prayers for the dead, the idea of purgatorial punishment was wont to be rejected; but their successors in our time have gone in that particular beyond the divines of the Caroline period.

Dr. Little-  
dale on  
temporary  
punish-  
ment.

Dr. Littledale's argument is as follows: "We are told very plainly that 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord (Heb. xii. 14), and that nothing that defileth shall enter into the heavenly Jerusalem' (Rev. xxi. 27), while, on the other hand, we know that the best and holiest men (and much more the average believers) leave this world bearing the stain of earthly sin and error,

His argu-  
ment.

which must be cleansed *somewhere* before they can be fitted for heaven. Following this thought, we find the Holy Scriptures tell us of temporary punishment after death. Our Lord tells us that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is the one sin that cannot be forgiven either in this world or in the world to come (St. Matt. xii. 32), words which, on the face of things, imply that there are sins unforgiven in this world which shall be forgiven in the next. [See our remarks on that passage on pp. 172-177.] And in the Sermon on the Mount He also warns us that when cast into prison we cannot come forth till we have paid the uttermost farthing (Matt. v. 26). This has been twisted to mean that we shall not come out at all, because the debt is too large for us to pay at any time; but that is not the natural meaning of the words."

Scripture  
passages  
strained.

The context, however, in which those words of our Lord occur, and the reference made to sins committed against a brother, are far from warranting any such a strained interpretation of the latter passage (Matt. v. 26). Those solemn words may contain a warning concerning a future punishment, as in the parallel passage in

Luke xii. 58, 59. The context alludes to the everlasting fire of Gehenna (Matt. v. 22). A similar thought is presented in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant recorded in Matt. xviii. 34. To explain such passages as though they stood alone, and were not qualified by their context, is grossly unfair. They do not teach us that the fire of Divine judgment is only temporary, or that the fire of Gehenna (Mark ix. 43-48) is a preparation for eternal bliss (see Chap. V., p. 155). It is utterly indefensible for Dr. Littledale to write as follows: "We are also taught that death does not stop the work of God in the soul, but that it continues. So in Ps. lxxxiv. we read, 'They will go from strength to strength, and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Zion.' And 'the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day' (Prov. iv. 18). This exactly agrees with St. Paul's words . . . [then follow the citations of Phil. i. 6, Phil. i. 10, 1 Thess. v. 23, the paragraph closing with the remark] If St. Paul had held the modern notions on the subject he would have prayed merely that his converts might persevere till the day of their death."

Passages  
cited do  
not teach  
that  
punish-  
ment is  
only tem-  
porary.

It must be remembered, however, that Ps. lxxxiv. speaks of pilgrim bands going up to the actual city of Jerusalem, and of nothing more. The passage in Prov. iv. 18 contains no reference to the life after death. In the three New Testament passages cited, St. Paul distinctly refers to the life on this side the grave. That Apostle (as every one "filled with the Spirit" ought to do) lived in constant anticipation of the second coming of the Master, although conscious, by the teaching imparted to him from above, that the coming of the Lord Jesus would be preceded by an apostasy within the Church, the beginnings of which apostasy in the Church had appeared even in his own day.

Apostolic  
anticipa-  
tion of  
Second  
Advent.

### § 7. "The Souls under the Altar"

—REV. vi. 10

Little-  
dale  
on Rev. vi.  
10.

It is necessary somewhat more fully to discuss the passage from the Book of the Revelation (vi. 10) which has been both in ancient and modern times unfairly adduced in this controversy. Dr. Littledale remarks on it as follows: "Even those who are happy are only imperfectly

so. The souls of the martyrs under the heavenly altar complain of delay, and are bidden to be patient (Rev. vi. 10), and the saints of the Old Testament cannot be made perfect till we join them (Heb. xi. 40)."

Such a view, however, of the passage in the Book of Revelation, though embodied not unfrequently in Christian hymns, is utterly incorrect. The passage, as may be already seen by any one who examines it in its context, is figurative, and not literal. It would, indeed, be strange if that passage were supposed to teach that the New Testament martyrs were continually praying for vengeance, and looking forward with intense longing for the day to arrive when their enemies would be punished! How different the spirit exhibited by Christ, and by His first martyr Stephen! But the passage has no such meaning.

Incorrect  
explanation.

Under the Old Testament arrangements, the blood of the victims that was shed was poured round about the altar at its base (Lev. iv. 7, 18, 25, 30, 34; v. 9; ix. 9). A tradition on the subject states that in the times of the second Temple the blood was conducted by subterranean channels into the Valley of Kidron, and ulti-

Blood and  
its signifi-  
cance.

mately utilised to manure the fields.<sup>1</sup> A portion of the blood of the victims was, no doubt, in certain cases sprinkled upon the altar round about (Lev. vii. 2), and in other cases even sprinkled upon the golden altar, and the Mercy-seat (Lev. xvi.). The blood was regarded as intimately connected with the life and soul, and therefore blood was not to be eaten; and the blood even of beasts slain was to be reverently covered over with earth. The altar was the place of sacrifice, and, in some aspects, represented God's throne. The earth, too, was thought of as God's altar, and the blood of the saints shed on the earth is represented in Rev. vi. as crying out for vengeance. Abel's blood shed by his brother's hand is thus represented in Gen. iv., as crying unto God from the ground. A similar thought is expressed by the Lord Jesus, when He spake of the blood of the prophets being required of the Jewish nation (Matt. xxiii. 34-36). The like figure is made use of in Rev. xvii. 24. Christ's own blood, shed for sin, and to take away sin, "speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. xii. 24), because

<sup>1</sup> See Kalisch, "Historical and Critical Commentary on Leviticus," I. p. 192, in the Preliminary Essay on Sacrifices.



it cries out to God for mercy, and not for vengeance. The righteous blood shed on earth, however, in the Prophets and in the Revelation, is repeatedly described as crying out for vengeance. For the martyrs' blood has a voice—a voice which nothing can still—it does cry out constantly for vengeance; and the prayer of Rev. vi. 10 is, Rev. vi. 10. therefore, represented in Rev. vi. 12–17, as answered in the horrors which attend the opening of the sixth seal, and precede the glory and salvation afterwards displayed.

Hence the passage in the Revelation has no bearing whatever on the subject before us. It does not depict the Intermediate state. It does not prove that the state after death, and prior to the resurrection, is a state of imperfect happiness. The interpretation of Heb. xi. 40, set forth by Dr. Littledale, is also incorrect, and opposed to Heb. xii. 23, where the spirits of just men are represented as even now “perfected,” although they still await the full glories of the Resurrection (see pp. 167, 193, 213).

No bearing  
on life  
after  
death.

## § 8. The Petrine Passages

—1 PET. iii. 18–20 and iv. 6

The pas-  
sages in  
1 Peter.

There are two passages found in the First Epistle of St. Peter which are constantly adduced as indirectly bearing on the possibility of prayer on earth benefiting the dead. Those passages are 1 Pet. iii. 18–20 and iv. 6. They are not, indeed, contained in the proof-texts cited by Dr. Littledale in his leaflet. Hence, for convenience' sake, we notice them after the passage in the Book of Revelation.

Dean  
Plumptre's  
work.

The ablest attempt to utilise those passages in favour of a theory of prayers for the dead is that contained in the work of the late Dean Plumptre.<sup>1</sup> The earlier editions of that work were criticised at some length in the fourth of our "Biblical Essays."<sup>2</sup> As the last edition of his work was passing through the press, Dean Plumptre appended (p. 418) a few remarks on our essay.

<sup>1</sup> "The Spirits in Prison and other Studies on the Life after Death." By E. H. Plumptre, D.D., Dean of Wells. New and Revised Edition. London, Wm. Isbister, Limited, 56 Ludgate Hill, 1887.

<sup>2</sup> "Biblical Essays; or, Exegetical Studies on the Books of Job and Jonah, Ezekiel's Prophecy of Gog and Magog, St. Peter's Spirits in Prison, and the Key to the Apocalypse." Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1886.

But that note was not (as he informed us in a friendly letter) supposed to be as a sufficient answer to our critique. But inasmuch as the main portion of Dean Plumptre's book was stereotyped, he could only add a short notice.

Our essay on "The Spirits in Prison" was not, as Dean Plumptre asserted, a defence of Augustine's interpretation, though coinciding to some extent with the interpretation given by the great Church Father. The foundation on which our interpretation is based is wholly different, and the exegesis given of the passage in the essay admits to the full the interpretation of the several clauses given by modern critics.

The following are the special points which have not (as far as we know) been replied to by any modern commentator :—

(1) It has been often assumed that there was some "historical tradition" current in the early Church concerning Christ's descent into Hades (the Unseen world), and that that "tradition" was independent of the passages in First Peter, and may, therefore, be regarded as throwing an important side-light on the meaning of an obscure passage. Such a "tradition" is, however, not to

Augustine's interpretation.

No tradition of Christ's descent into Hades except as derived from 1 Peter.

be found in the Apostolic Fathers, in the writings of Justin Martyr,<sup>1</sup> or of any early Father.

Hermas. Hermas nowhere mentions Christ's preaching to the dead. That strange writer, however, speaks of a preaching (*κηρύγμα*) by the "Apostles and teachers" in the unseen world. The "Apostles and teachers," according to Hermas, baptized in Hades the saints of the Old Testament dispensation who had not received the "seal" during their lifetime ("Sim." ix. 16). See our remarks on page 217.

Clement  
of Alex-  
andria.

Clement of Alexandria (who died about A.D. 216) applied part of Hermas's statement to the Gentiles before Christ, "who lived in righteousness according to the law and philosophy" ("Strom." vi. 6). Clement cites in that connection the passage in St. Peter iii., and maintains that St. Peter spoke of a preaching of the Gospel by our Lord "to those who perished in the flood."

<sup>1</sup> Justin Martyr ("Dialogue against Trypho," cap. 72) accuses the Jews of having fraudulently removed from the Book of Jeremiah a prophecy which stated that "The Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, remembered His dead people of Israel who slept in the sepulchre, and descended to them to preach to them the glad tidings of salvation." The same apocryphal prophecy is twice referred to by Irenæus ("Against Heresies," lib. iii. 20, 4 and lib. iv. 22, 1). In the first of those places the prophecy is ascribed to Isaiah, in the second to Jeremiah.

The "tradition" (if that expression be used) of the early Church, therefore, can be traced back to St Peter's Epistle. No independent oral tradition is anywhere alluded to. All the Patristic statements are "after-thoughts," false or true, based on the expressions made use of by the Apostle. Hermas's imaginations, though his book was popular, were not generally accepted. The deductions of Clement of Alexandria, moreover, fall far short of the conclusions drawn by the liberal divines of the nineteenth century. If the latter require precedents, they ought to have recourse to the statements of the early Jewish writers cited in the former chapters of this book.

(2) It is important to note that St. Peter in his epistle clearly refers to something well known to the Christians in his day. He did not make any fresh revelation, as St. Paul did when writing of the events which were to take place at the Second Advent (1 Thess. v. 15), or when he more fully expounded the doctrine of the resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 51). No new revelation.

St. Peter in the context exhorts believers to patience under their sufferings, and, in that connection, speaks of Christ as put to death in Context of 1 Pet. iii.

the flesh, but quickened in the spirit. That which had happened to the Master would likewise happen to His disciples. Those who had already passed from the ranks of the Church militant to join the Church triumphant had had the Gospel preached to them, that although judged according to men in the flesh (σαρκί), they might live according to God in the spirit (πνεύματι). The likeness between Christ and His people is complete. Being "found" in the likeness of man (Phil. ii. 8), He suffered death. His people, like Him, were to pass through the gate of death to their eternal reward (1 Pet. iv. 6).

St. Peter's  
references  
to well-  
known  
facts.

The passage in St. Peter bristles with references to points the Church knew well. We can only briefly touch on the question here, and as we have elsewhere treated the matter in detail, we may be excused from again fully entering into the exegesis.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Our interpretation is to a large extent, though not slavishly, based upon the remarkable essay of the late Professor A. Schweizer of Zürich, "*Hinabgefahren zur Hölle als Mythos ohne biblische Begründung* durch Auslegung der Stelle" 1 Pet. iii. 17-22, nachgewiesen, Zürich, 1868. Schweizer's work has been passed over by Plumptre, and by Bishop L. N. Dahle in "Life after Death," translated by Rev. J. Beveridge (T. & T. Clark, 1896), although the latter has utilised von Zeschwitz's treatise. Otherwise those scholars would have seen that many of their criticisms have been replied to by anticipation. Professor S. D. F. Salmond has

(3) The whole passage in 1 Peter iii. 18–20 may be fairly interpreted as follows. We quote from the Revised Version as it is more correct than the Authorised Version, adding our interpretation in parentheses. “It is better, if the will of God should so will, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing. Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh (*σαρκί*), but quickened in the spirit (*πνεύματι*).”

Correct  
rendering  
of 1 Pet. iii.

The expression “quickened” (*ζωοποιηθείς*) might be rendered “made alive,” or “kept alive.” There is a remarkable parallel in Barnabas, Chap. vi., which is commented on in our essay, p. 146, note 2. “In the spirit” (*πνεύματι*) must refer to Christ’s

Quickened  
in the  
spirit.

also ably treated the whole passage in his “Christian Doctrine of Immortality” (Third Edition, T. & T. Clark, 1897). Except as a link in the history of exegesis, the few pages which Bishop Horsley wrote on the subject may fairly be passed over. To refer again and again to that treatment as “masterly” is deceptive. For Bishop Horsley had not the opportunity of noticing later criticisms which fully meet his points. It is a pity that scholars on the other side should write so dogmatically, and assume that the question has been definitely settled, when every point of objection adduced by the modern critics has been fairly stated and replied to. It is this fact which makes us object so strongly to our view of the passage being confounded with that of Augustine, whose exegesis lay open to the charges brought against it, even by Dean Alford. We do not claim on our side to have settled the question, but we do maintain that no Christian dogmas ought to be based upon such obscure passages.

O

Spirit and  
flesh.

spirit. The reading, *τῷ πνεύματι*, which led the translators of the Authorised Version to translate "the Spirit," referring it to the Holy Spirit, is not that of the early MSS., and is disproved by the parallel "in the flesh," *σαρκί*, which antithesis is also found in 1 Peter iv. 6.

The spirit  
of Christ.

"In which he went and preached to the spirits in prison." "In which," that is, in which spirit, or higher nature. The spirit of Christ as a part of His threefold nature is, in Heb. ix. 14 (see Bishop Westcott's "Commentary on Hebrews"), said to be "eternal." That "spirit" was in existence prior to the incarnation.<sup>1</sup>

"Spirits in  
prison."

The phrase, "spirits in prison,"<sup>2</sup> is only

<sup>1</sup> Christ's incarnation consisted in His taking upon Himself "flesh and blood" (Heb. ii. 14). "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John i. 14). The human soul and body originated from His human mother, but the "spirit" came from above. The "spirit" is spoken of in the Old Testament in passages which might be explained as the Pre-incarnate Word. In Isa. lxiii. 10, "His holy Spirit" is closely connected with "the Angel of His presence" in the preceding verse. The Pre-incarnate Word manifested itself in angelic form in the days of old. For the captain of Jehovah's army, spoken of in Josh. iii. 13, is termed Jehovah in Josh. v. 2. So Zech. iii. 1, 2; Mal. iii. 1. He appeared then, as angels did, in human form, was recognised by the patriarchs, and worshipped as Divine (Gen. xxxii. 24-30; Hosea xii. 3-5). Hence, there is no difficulty in the expression "went" (*πορεύθεις*), which is used of Christ's departure into heaven in a text in close proximity to this very passage (1 Pet. iii. 22). Compare also Gen. xi. 5, 7. The objection, founded on the use of that expression, is consequently of no force whatever.

<sup>2</sup> The literal translation of the Greek is: "in which (spirit), also



found in this single passage. But the analogy of Rev. xx. 7, compared with Matt. v. 25, and 2 Pet. ii. 4 with Jude 6, seems distinctly to point to the prison-house of lost souls. In Isaiah xxiv. 21, 22, rebel men on earth and evil angels on high are both spoken of as cast into the pit, and reserved for judgment—an after judgment. Compare the story of a similar judgment after victory in Josh. x. 17–26, bearing in mind that pits without water were often employed as temporary prisons (Gen. xxxvii. 24; Zech. ix. 11).

“Which aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah,”  
&c. Their disobedience.

The spirits spoken of by Peter are described as “in prison.” Their imprisonment was caused by disobedience, when the long-suffering of God waited in vain for their repentance (see Chap. vi. p. 168). Similar transgressors are spoken of in 2 Pet. ii. 9, as “kept under punishment unto the day of judgment” (Revised Version). The article would naturally have been expected before the participle

having gone to the spirits in prison, he preached.” The text does not say “which were in prison,” or “which are in prison.” The Greek might be interpreted in either way. That point can only be decided from the context.

(ἀπειθήσασιν). Had the article been used, the disobedience in past times would appear to be contrasted with an implied obedience in later days. We do not, however, assert that the omission of the article is decisive as to the exegesis. The aorist participle indicates that the disobedience took place in past time, and no more. It is difficult, indeed, to render the clause without importing into it some interpretation of the words. But the passage simply speaks of "the spirits in prison, disobedient aforetime (ποτε), when (ὅτε) the long-suffering of God waited," &c.

The theologians who have sought to discover in the passage their own preconceived ideas have added to the difficulty of the clause. The Apostle only glanced for a moment at the terrible judgment inflicted on the sinners at the deluge. He hastened on to compare the deliverance offered to mankind through an entrance by baptism into "the ark of Christ's Church" with the salvation once offered in vain to the antediluvian sinners through the ark of Noah. Christ as the Pre-incarnate Word had offered deliverance to the world in Noah's time. Whether Christ preached in human form to that world in His own person, or preached to Noah,

Christ as  
the Pre-  
incarnate  
Word.

and the message was delivered by Noah to the world, is a question of no importance. The offer made in either case was made by the Pre-incarnate Redeemer. Hence the reference of the Apostle to the long-suffering of the Son of God in former days was no digression; while the allusion to the fate of "the spirits in prison" was a warning to those who might read the apostolic letters that they should take care not to "fall after the same example of disobedience" (Heb. iv. 11).

It is thus we expound the passage. Although we firmly adhere to the statement in the Creed that Christ descended into Hades, or the Unseen, we maintain a veil has been drawn over the work which Christ performed in the region of the dead. That He admitted the penitent malefactor into Paradise is a clear deduction from His own promise to that effect (Luke xxiii. 43), and that in consequence of His atoning death the spirits of just men were made perfect is the natural interpretation of the statement in Heb. xii. 23. But the statements made in later days of the release of Adam, of the bringing forth of the patriarchs, &c., are pure inventions of the apocryphal "Gospel of Nicodemus," which book significantly does not even

Veil drawn  
over  
Christ's  
work in  
Hades.

venture to allude to "the spirits in prison," of whom St. Peter spoke, and spoke distinctly.

Silence of  
Scripture.

We can go no further. Scripture affords us no safe foothold on which to erect any theory of salvation beyond the grave. It invests us with no authority whatever to add to the revelation granted in the apostolic days, as Swedenborg has done in his revelations concerning heaven and hell. Scripture does not justify us in inventing a practice of prayers for the dead, never dreamed of by the Old Testament prophets, and never taught by the Apostles. The old "orthodox" theologians, no doubt, went too far in asserting that there was no possibility of salvation on the other side of the grave. The "second death," and the horrors that hang around it, were too often depicted in language which did not shock those who lived in a more barbarous age, but which is most repulsive in the present day. There may be some great revelation of mercy manifested in the day of the Lord Jesus. The mourning glanced at by the Apostle (Rev. i. 7), may possibly be but a fresh outburst of the penitential wailing, followed by a manifestation of mercy, described by Zech. xii. 10-xiii. 1. That prophet's language

is quoted in the Book of the Revelation. But "the day of wrath, that awful day," is a reality not to be forgotten. And the speculations of modern divines, determined to find the dogma of "universal restitution" in the pages of Scripture (from which it has by Divine wisdom been carefully excluded), are likely to work more evil to Christianity, than Puritan divines ever wrought by their exaggerations in the opposite direction. The Puritans were led astray by their desire to be accounted truly "orthodox," and by too implicit reliance on the Jewish thinkers, and on the Church Fathers who had preceded them.

Speculations of modern divines.

## CHAPTER VII

### PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD IN THE EARLY AGES OF CHRISTIANITY

#### § 1. *The Apostolic Fathers and the Inscriptions in the Catacombs*

The  
Apostolic  
Fathers.

THE writings of the Apostolic Fathers contain no traces of the practice of prayers for the dead. Those writings include the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, the Ancient Homily wrongly described as the Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, the Epistle of Polycarp, the Epistle of Barnabas, the Epistles of Ignatius, the Epistle to Diognetus, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Fragments of Papias, to which, owing to recent discoveries, may now be added the Apology of Aristides, and the Didaché of the Apostles.

Shepherd  
of Hermas.

The Shepherd of Hermas in the third book, that known as the Similitudes, in Sim. ix., which treats of the building of the church militant and triumphant, describes (Chap. xvi.) the "Apostles

and teachers who preached in the name of the Son of God," as baptizing in the intermediate state those who had fallen asleep prior to the institution of that sacrament (see p. 206). By means of that post-mortem baptism the spirits of just men who died before Christ seem, in the opinion of that Father, to have been "perfected." Forasmuch as such a baptism after death is taught distinctly by Hermas, it is the more remarkable that there is no allusion to prayers for the dead. This fact in itself is a strong argument against the existence of any such practice in that early age. The silence of Hermas on the subject is also the more significant when it is borne in mind that the practice of offering up such prayers as we have pointed out in our previous chapters was no custom of the Jewish Church in or prior to the days of Christ. For in that case the practice might have been silently adopted by the Christian Church of the early age.

The Christian inscriptions in the Roman catacombs have been often appealed to as bearing distinct testimony in favour of the practice of prayer for the dead in the early Christian Church. The question of those inscriptions cannot be dis-

Roman  
catacombs.

The  
Catacombs  
were not  
exclusively  
Christian.

cussed in our pages at any length. The literature on the subject is very extensive, and would require for its satisfactory discussion a far larger volume than the present. But it must not be forgotten that there are many important points upon which no decided agreement exists among the specialists who have given full attention to the matter. The Roman catacombs excavated in the tufa which underlies the hills outside the ancient boundaries of the great city of Rome, though the vastest in extent, are not the only cemeteries of that kind. Those cemeteries do not appear to have been exclusively Christian, although that theory is still defended in some quarters. To a considerable extent those catacombs are also Pagan, and as already noted, there were early Jewish catacombs. The heathen Romans did not place any difficulties in the way of persons burying their dead. In the time of Julius Cæsar legal protection was given to Jewish cemeteries, and the Jews were permitted freely to form burial associations of their own.

In the early persecutions carried on against the Christians, no difficulties were placed in the way of those "devout men" who desired to convey



the remains of the dead from the place of execution to their last earthly resting-places, and to "make lamentation over them." In later days, no doubt, that liberty was often seriously interfered with.

Burial of  
dead.

The view that the Roman catacombs were exclusively formed for the burial of Christians is now generally regarded as untenable. Those mortuary places were used by Pagan, Jew, and Christian. It is not improbable in later times that heathen monuments may have been adapted, or at least copied, by Christians. The masons and diggers who executed the work were not unlikely to a large extent Pagan. After the compromise with Paganism effected by the Emperor Constantine, it is likely that the formulas on Christian tombs were to some extent modelled after the pattern of the older Roman. The great object of the Church and State then was to unite both parties, and that object was materially assisted by a similarity to some extent in the inscriptions set up over the graves of the departed.

The inscriptions in the Roman catacombs rarely contain dates. The number of those

Few dates  
found in  
the Cata-  
combs.

inscriptions which can with any certainty be ascribed to an earlier period than A.D. 250 are comparatively few. By far the largest number, even of the earlier inscriptions, belong to the third and fourth centuries; and at that time the practice of prayers for the dead had become more or less common. It is, therefore, a matter of no little importance to be able to distinguish the earlier from the later inscriptions, but unfortunately upon that point clear and distinct evidence is not forthcoming.

Many inscriptions with no prayers.

The inscriptions in the catacombs include a large number of cases in which no prayer whatever is found. Many of them simply record the name of the individual, with the simple addition of the word *pax*, or "peace." Or they contain the curt phrase *in pace*, "in peace." Such statements as are found over later graves, such as So-and-so was "fetched away by the angels" (*arcessitus ab angelis*), and was "in peace," or "Eamenes lies in peace," are not instances of prayers for the dead. Even such an address to a departed wife, in which she, in the language of love and affection, is bidden to enjoy herself with the spirits of the holy: *Refrigera cum spirita sancta*, "Refresh thyself

with the holy spirits," though bad Latin, cannot be accused of being bad theology. The inscription over a child, "Victor, God's lamb," with other short but sweet sentences, speak of a glorious certainty of peace, of a victory won over death, but give no countenance to the idea of praying for the dead.

The first form, too, of what may be regarded as prayers, though it is open to dispute whether some of them would not more properly be described as pious wishes, contain little which can be really objected to. We refer to such as the following, quoted by Dean Luckock: "Peace be to thy soul, Zosime," "And peace be to Fortunata, my sweetest daughter." These expressions of love, mingled with grief, sound through the ages as little more than a Christian "good-night"; and had prayers for the dead never passed beyond the use of such endearing wishes and prayers, no theologians would have ever ventured to condemn them as heretical.

The prayers for the refreshment of the souls are scarcely more objectionable. For such exclamations cannot be proved to be more than holy wishes for the refreshment in Paradise of those who had

Good wishes for the dead.

Christian "good-night."

Refreshment of souls.

been sorely tossed and troubled when on earth. Hence we would not hereticise such as : “Hilaris, may you live happily with your friends [in Heaven or Paradise]! May you ever be refreshed in the peace of God.”<sup>1</sup> “Kalamerus, may God refresh thy spirit, together with that of thy sister Hilara.” “Timothea, mayest thou have eternal light in Christ.” “Ireneia, mayest thou live in God, the Alpha and Omega.” “Victoria, mayest thou live in God.”

R.I.P. All such good wishes can scarcely be seriously found fault with. Had even the much misused, and much abused, phrase *requiescat in pace* (may he rest in peace!) retained the simple meaning which it possessed in the early centuries, even that expression would scarcely have aroused any expression of dissent. All those inscriptions are evidences that the early Christians believed that the faithful dead entered at once into a state of rest and peace. They do not prove, as Dean Luckock asserts, that “death interposed no barrier to the prayers of those who survived.”

Rest and peace.

<sup>1</sup> We note the doubt mentioned by Dr Luckock with regard to the antiquity of this particular inscription, but that doubt does not affect our argument.

The student must ever be on his guard against being misled by the mistaken sense put upon such phraseology in mediæval times.

It is not difficult, indeed, to trace in the inscriptions in the catacombs the gradual growth of the idea of prayers for the dead. There are many inscriptions which express only a firm faith in the happiness of those who had in divers ways been cut off, like their great Master, from the land of the living. There are others which express a pious wish for the felicity of those who had gone before. There are also later inscriptions in which the pious wish has developed into a prayer, and in which the record carved in the stone (however beautifully it may be expressed) is significant of the fact that Christians had in very deed begun to pray for the departed.

Growth of  
prayers for  
the dead.

But even in the latter case, it must be remembered that the prayers offered up for ages were offered up only for the dead in Christ. Those prayers do not petition for any release from suffering of any kind, but are prayers which ask for the refreshment of persons supposed already to be "in peace" with Christ.

Prayers  
only for  
those in  
Christ.

## § 2. The Petitions for the Dead in the so-called Primitive Liturgies and Later Prayers

Petitions  
for de-  
ceased  
Christians.

Prayers for those who were supposed to have slept in Jesus, and to be in felicity among the spirits of just men made perfect, for a long time lingered on in the Church, having been embalmed, so to speak, in those documents known as the "Primitive Liturgies." In one sense the name so given may be properly used, for the Liturgies thus designated are unquestionably the earliest specimens. But when the name "Primitive" is used to pass off the doctrines taught in those "Liturgies" as Apostolic, and as forming part of the inheritance of the true Catholic Church, we are compelled to protest against the phraseology.

Primitive  
Liturgies.

The Primitive Liturgies, as they are termed, are documents to which only a limited amount of credence can be given. They contain, no doubt, ancient prayers, and prayers of considerable beauty. Apostolic they certainly are not. Their very text is uncertain; and, as a whole, they cannot be depended on as evidences for Apostolic doctrine. Even Dean Luckock has to admit that

they have been "greatly developed and added to under the influence of various circumstances."

The cultus of the Blessed Virgin is notoriously found in the present texts, although it can be proved from unquestionable evidence that that doctrine was not in existence in the early centuries. The teaching of the Primitive Liturgies on the Lord's Supper is decidedly opposed to the teaching of the New Testament. But to enter into that subject would lead us away from the point of investigation at present before us.<sup>1</sup>

Their doctrines often opposed to Scripture.

<sup>1</sup> The names of these Liturgies, the Liturgy of St. Mark, the Liturgy of St. James, &c., are derived from the districts in which those Liturgies were used, or supposed to have been used, namely, Alexandria, Jerusalem, &c. The Rev. Wm. Palmer, M.A., in his *Origines Liturgicae*, Oxford, 1832, gave an impetus to the study of those Liturgies in England. A splendid edition of their full texts is given in the more recent edition of these and other Liturgies by C. E. Hammond, and published at the University Press, Oxford. The latter is the really classical edition. A smaller edition of the texts, in one vol., with the English translations in another, was issued by Dr. Neale and Dr. Littledale. Its title is: "The Liturgies of St. Mark, St. James, St. Clement, St. Chrysostom, St. Basil: or, according to the use of the Churches of Alexandria, Jerusalem, Constantinople, and the formula of the Apostolic Constitutions." Edited by the Rev. J. M. Neale, D.D. Fourth Edition with Preface by Dr. Littledale. London: Dickinson, Farringdon Street, 1896. The volume of translations contains also a translation of the Liturgy of the Church of Malabar. An English translation of the three principal of the Liturgies, from which the later were derived, namely, the Liturgies of James, Mark, and the Holy Apostles, is published by T. & T. Clark in a Supplemental volume of the Ante-Nicene Library in 1883, entitled, "Liturgies and other Documents of the Ante-Nicene Period. The oldest MSS. do not go back farther than the tenth century. Such documents ought not be palmed off upon the Christian public as

Liturgy of  
St. James.

The prayer for the dead in the so-called Liturgy of St. James is as follows:—

“Remember, O Lord, the God of the spirits and of all flesh, the orthodox of whom we have made mention, and of whom we have not made mention [the latter sentence is omitted in the translation of Neale and Littledale, but occurs in their Greek text], from righteous Abel unto this day. Give them rest there, in the land of the living, in Thy kingdom, in the delight (ἐν τῇ τρυφῇ) of Paradise, in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, our holy fathers, whence pain, sorrow, and groaning have fled, where the light of Thy countenance looks down and enlightens for ever.”

Liturgy of  
St. Mark.

So in the Liturgy of St. Mark:—

“O Lord, our God, give rest (ἀνάπαυσον) to the souls of our fathers and brethren who have heretofore slept in Christ, remembering our forefathers, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, holy, just, every spirit that has been perfected (τετελειωμένων), and those of whom we make mention to-day,” &c.

Prayer in  
Canon of  
Mass.

Furthermore, in the Canon of the Mass in the Roman Church, up to the present day, in the commemoration for the dead, the following prayer is offered up:—

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affording evidence of prayers for the dead, or of any other objectionable doctrines, in Apostolic or even sub-Apostolic times. The idea of developed Liturgies for the use of the Churches cannot be traced, upon any evidence worth the name, back to any period near the early days of New Testament Christianity.



"Remember, O Lord, Thy servants and Thy handmaidens, N. and N., who have gone before us with the ensign of faith, and sleep in the sleep of peace. To them, O Lord, and to all resting in Christ, we beseech that Thou wouldest grant a place of refreshment, light, and peace."

Prayer is here made for all the departed, even for those of whose present peace and happiness the Church had no doubt whatever. Thus prayer was offered up on behalf of the Virgin Mary and of the Apostles. For the Church was long before it accepted even in the west the Papal doctrine, that "he does an injury unto a martyr that prays for a martyr."<sup>1</sup>

Prayer for  
Virgin  
Mary, &c.

Hence in the Liturgy of Malabar, revised according to Neale "by the Portuguese Archbishop of Goa, Alexis de Menezes, and the Synod of Diamper, 1599," we read:—

Liturgy of  
Malabar.

"Pray, bearing in memory our fathers, the Catholics, and all presbyters and deacons, youths and virgins, and all the faithful who have departed from the living, and are dead in the true faith. And all our fathers and brethren, and sons and daughters; also faithful kings, beloved of Christ, and all prophets, apostles, and martyrs, let us pray, I say, that in the resurrection from the dead they may be rewarded by God with the crown, with a good hope, and the inheritance of the life of the kingdom of heaven."

<sup>1</sup> See Archbishop Ussher's "Answer to a Jesuit," p. 210 ff. of the edition of 1631.

No suffering Church  
in Hades.

These and all such prayers, though not by any means free from all that is objectionable, are important as being relics of a purer age, in which prayer was offered up for the whole Church triumphant. In such prayers nothing is taught about a church suffering punishment in the other world, whether that suffering was supposed to be of a purificatory character, or as "satisfaction" for sins committed on earth.

### § 3. The Writings of the Fathers

Strange  
views  
of the  
Fathers.

Many strange views were abroad in the Church of comparatively early ages founded on a mistaken interpretation of the words of the Baptist (founded on Mal. iii. 2-4): "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (Matt. iii. 11). Those who attached such enormous importance to baptism by water, as to imagine, with Hermas and others, that an actual material baptism of that kind was essential to salvation, and that the rite was sometimes performed in Hades (see p. 206), were logically led to interpret the "baptism of fire" as literal also. It therefore became natural to think of the fire of the day of the

Lord as having a purifying effect upon those who were supposed to pass through it in ascending upwards from the burning world to meet the Lord in the air. No wonder that men in love with those visionary interpretations, and opposed to the sober teaching of the inspired Word, should have written such absurdities as Tertullian has done, on the inconsistency of a woman praying for the refreshment of the soul of her first husband and for fellowship with him in the final resurrection, and venturing to commit the sin of marrying a second husband, which Tertullian stigmatised as adultery.<sup>1</sup> Tertullian.

Lactantius, who died about A.D. 325, in his "Divine Institutes" (Lib. vii. capp. xxi.—xxvii.), sets forth not a few strange ideas concerning the things preceding, and connected with, the final judgment. And Ambrose (Psalt. i. 5, quoted by Archbishop Ussher in his "Answer to a Challenge Lactantius  
and  
Ambrose.

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian had, no doubt, embraced Montanist views before he wrote the treatise on "Chastity and Monogamy." But that has nothing to do with our argument, which is that the Fathers, to a large extent, were very inferior expositors of Scripture; and, moreover, were perpetually making additions to the teaching of the Word of God. The teaching of Scripture is constantly misrepresented in their writings, and yet those writings are supposed by some to set forth the true "Catholic doctrine."

made by a Jesuit ”), says : “ They that come not to the first resurrection but are reserved to the second, shall be burned until they fulfil the times between the first and the second resurrection ; or if they have not fulfilled them, they shall remain longer in punishment. So, therefore, let us pray that we may deserve to have part in the first resurrection.”

Fathers in-  
consistent.

The Fathers were far from being infallible, and the corruption of the Church steadily advanced (as St. Paul had predicted), from century to century. Hence it is not essential to our argument to trace the gradual advance of the theory and practice of prayers for the dead through the various centuries up to the time in which that practice became common in all the Churches of Christendom. It would be easy, did space permit, to point out the inconsistent statements on the subject with which the writings of the Fathers abound. Augustine and Cyril (as Archbishop Ussher has shown), were not at all clear as to the benefit the dead obtained from such petitions (Ussher, p. 274). Augustine considered that the oblations and alms in the Church “ for all the dead that received baptism were thanksgivings for such as were very

good, propitiations for such as were not very bad ; but as for such as were very evil, although they were no helps of the dead, yet were they some kind of consolation for the living " (Augustin. *Enchiridion ad Laurent.*, cap. 110, quoted by Ussher, p. 206). Chrysostom, though not opposed to prayers for the dead—and who sometimes expresses himself as if such prayers might even to some degree benefit the lost—could, when he was speaking to those who mourned for believers, speak thus: "Do not we praise God, and give thanks unto Him for that He hath now crowned him that is departed, for that He hath freed him from his labours, for that freeing him from fear, he keepeth him with Himself? Are not the hymns for this end? Is not the singing of the Psalms for this purpose? All these be tokens of rejoicing" (In *Epist. ad Heb. hom.* 4, quoted by Ussher, p. 205).

Chrysostom, on Heb. ii. 5-7.

It is therefore clear that whatever strange views might be expressed upon these subjects by individuals, the general opinion of the Church on the point was very different from that put forward by those men who now seek to reintroduce it into the Church from mediæval sources. Paradise,

Paradise  
not purga-  
tory.

Greek  
*Euchologe.*

into which the righteous enter at death, was looked upon by the Fathers as a place of felicity, and not as a place of penitential mourning. In the prayer quoted by Ussher from the Greek *Euchologe*, the general opinion of the Church is set forth as follows. Some of the petitions no doubt cannot be justified from Scripture :—

“ Receive, O Lord, our prayers and supplications, and give rest unto all our fathers and mothers, and brethren and sisters, and children, and all our other kindred and alliance : and unto all souls that rest before us in hope of the everlasting resurrection. And place their spirits and their bodies in the Book of Life, in the bosom of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, in the region of the living, in the kingdom of heaven, in the paradise of delight ; by Thy bright angels bringing all into Thy holy mansions. Raise also our bodies together with theirs, in the day which Thou hast appointed, according to Thy holy and true promises. It is not a death then, O Lord, unto Thy servants, when we depart from the body and go home to our God : but a translation from a sorrowful state unto a better and more delightful ; and a refreshment and joy. And if we have sinned in anything against Thee, be gracious both unto us and unto them, forasmuch as no man is clean from pollution before Thee, no, though his life were but of one day ; Thou alone excepted who didst appear upon earth without sin, Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom we all hope to obtain mercy and pardon of our sins. Therefore as a good and merciful God, release and forgive both us and them : pardon our offences, as well voluntary as involuntary, of knowledge and of ignorance, both manifest and hidden, in deed, in thought, in word, in all our conversations and motions, and to those that are

gone before us, grant freedom and release, and us that remain bless, granting a good and a peaceable end both to us and to all Thy people.”<sup>1</sup>

#### § 4. The Epitaph of Abercius

In the first volume of his masterly edition of “The Apostolic Fathers,” Part ii., which contains the writings of St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp, with Revised Texts, Introduction, Notes, Dissertations and Translation (London: Macmillan & Co., 1885), the late Bishop J. B. Lightfoot of Durham, in a Dissertation on the Church and the Empire under Hadrian (A.D. 117–138), Pius (A.D. 138–161), and Marcus (A.D. 161–180) gives an account of Abercius (or Aberkios or Avircius), Bishop of Hierapolis in Lesser Phrygia. Abercius was bishop during the time of Marcus Aurelius and L. Verus his adopted brother. The latter monarch was nominally associated with Marcus Aurelius as emperor, but did not exercise much of the authority belonging to that office, and was known

Abercius  
epitaph.

<sup>1</sup> A prayer similar to the above is also contained in the “Apost. Const., viii. 41, often styled the Liturgy of St. Clement. Others of a like import may be found in the small collection of “prayers for the faithful departed” given in Neale and Littledale’s translations, Appendix ii.

rather as his brother's lieutenant than his equal in authority. He died before Marcus in A.D. 169.

Bishop  
Lightfoot's  
sketch.

Bishop Lightfoot's sketch of Abercius' life gives first the legendary history of that stalwart supporter of episcopacy, and then records the further narrative how Abercius distinguished himself by breaking in pieces the statue of Apollo in the temple of Apollo in Hierapolis, and afterwards the other images of the gods in that temple. He was rescued from a death which seemed to be inevitable by driving demons out of three young men who were possessed with them. The miracle turned the fury of the mob into deep veneration, and led to the conversion of the multitude from idolatry, and to the baptism of five hundred persons next day. In revenge for the successful assault of his stronghold, the devil shortly after imposed upon the saint a journey to Rome, which was brought about by the devil's taking possession of the Princess Lucilla, daughter of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, who was betrothed to the younger emperor, Verus. In vain were efforts made in every way to heal the girl; the devil declared that he would not come out unless Abercius was fetched from Hierapolis. Hence



the letter of the emperor to Euxenianus, governor of Lesser Phrygia, which is given by Lightfoot on p. 476. After divers delays Abercius came to Rome, expelled the demon, and commanded him to take up an altar which stood in the hippodrome, and to convey it to Hierapolis. That altar was used as the tombstone of Abercius, and upon it was inscribed by Abercius in his lifetime the epitaph, in Greek, which we are about to give a translation of, and which contains a clause asking for prayers of the orthodox at his grave.

Legend of  
Abercius.

The inscription is given in the original Greek by Bishop Lightfoot, with a translation and notes. Professor W. R. Ramsay, who was the original discoverer of the tomb, has given a more recent copy of the Greek text with a translation, and critical notes upon the readings and translations proposed by Bishop Lightfoot and other critics. We quote from No. IV. of Professor Ramsay's most interesting articles on "Early Christian Monuments in Phrygia, a Study in the Early History of the Church." Nos. I. and II. of the articles appeared in *The Expositor* in vol. viii. for 1888, and Nos. III. and IV. in vol. ix. for 1889.

The discovery of the actual monument in

Phrygia shows how the legendary history has embodied something of truth, and how it has widely erred by understanding what is an allegory as it were a history. Abercius did actually make use of a heathen altar as a tombstone, and inscribed on that altar the following allegory in Greek verse :—

Professor  
Ramsay's  
translation  
of epitaph.

"A citizen of the select [or *notable* (L.) ἐκλεκτῆς] city I have, while still living, made this (tomb) that I might have here before the eyes of men [φανερῶς, Lightfoot read *καιρῶ* and translated "in due season"] a place where to lay my body. Being by name Avircius, a disciple of the spotless [ἀγνοῦ, "pure," L.] Shepherd, who on mountains feedeth the flocks of His sheep and on plains, who hath large eyes that see all things [καὶ πανθ' ὁρώωντας; L. read *πάντη καθορῶντας*, "looking on all sides"].

"For He was my teacher, [teaching] the faithful writings. He who sent me to Rome to behold the King, and to see the Queen that wears golden robes and golden shoes. And I saw there a people having a shining seal. And Syria's plain I saw, and all its cities, even Nisibis, crossing the Euphrates. And everywhere I found fellow-worshippers [συνομήθεις. L. has *συνομίλους*, "associates"].

"Holding Paul in my hands [*i.e.* Paul's writings, L. reads the same, but renders "with Paul as my comrade"] I followed, while Faith everywhere went in front, and everywhere set before me as food the Fish from the fountain, mighty, pure, which a spotless Virgin grasped. And this she (*i.e.* Faith) gave to friends to eat at all times [διὰ παντός], having good wine, giving the mixed cup, [κέρασμα] with bread.

These words I, Avircius, standing by, ordered to be written : I was of a truth in my seventy-second year. When he sees this, let every one pray for him [Avircius] who thinks with him.<sup>1</sup> But no one shall place another in my grave<sup>2</sup>; and, if he do, he shall pay 2000 gold pieces to the Romans, and 1000 gold pieces to my excellent fatherland Hierapolis."

We have in the above translation mainly followed Professor Ramsay's translation, except in minute points scarcely worthy of mention. Bishop Lightfoot's more important differences of reading and rendering are duly given within the brackets. For the sake of greater clearness we have divided it into paragraphs. Minor differences.

The general drift is plain. The writings of faith are the sacred writings which contain and propound the faith as it is in Jesus. The mystic meaning of the king is somewhat uncertain, the queen in her golden attire is the Roman Church, the shining seal is baptism. Meaning of the epitaph.

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Lightfoot follows here the same reading as Professor Ramsay, *πᾶς ὁ συνφδός*, but he translates "let every friend who observeth this." In his note he says that by *συνφδός* Abercius "appears to mean a fellow-Christian." Professor Ramsay considers that rendering too weak, and explains it as meaning an "anti-Montanist."

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Lightfoot following a somewhat different text translates here, "But no man shall place another tomb above mine." For the special purpose for which we have introduced the mention of the epitaph, it is unnecessary to consider minutely such points.

An alle-  
gory.

Avircius<sup>1</sup> maintains that all the churches practise the same things. Perhaps this is an attack on his opponents, the Montanists, who were for a freer ritual and seem to have opposed the pretensions of episcopacy. The special importance of St. Paul's writings is distinctly set forward, probably because the Church of Rome was then proud of the great epistle which that Apostle had written to her. The second sacrament, that of the Lord's Supper, is plainly referred to, not, however, as a sacrifice but as food, and food which could be eaten at all times, διὰ παντός, and not merely at the solemn rite of the Supper. Christ is set forth as born of a pure virgin. The name given to Him, "the Fish from the Fountain," alludes to Christ set forth as the symbolical Fish, because the Greek ἰχθύς, or fish, was used as an anagram of Christ, Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Ὑιὸς Σωτήρ, *Jesus Christ, God's Son, the Saviour*, the initials of the Greek word *fish* making up that sacred confession of faith. The mixed cup of water and wine used in the administration of the Lord's Supper is plainly mentioned.

<sup>1</sup> Professor Ramsay maintains that the true name is Avircius. He makes use of Abercius to denote the saint as described in legend and Avircius the historical individual himself.

The last paragraph contains perhaps the earliest distinct allusion to prayers for the dead. That reference, indeed, might be disputed. For Abercius or Avircius erected the monument in his lifetime, and may have wished that those who agreed with him would pray for him during his lifetime. The allegory on his tomb would be clearly understood by the Christians for whom it was intended. But assuming the passage to signify that Avircius sought for prayers for himself when dead, there is no indication given what was to be the nature of the prayer, and in the light of the fact that prayers were offered at first for all who had died in faith, the prayers solicited cannot be proved to be for pardon of sin, but seem to have been regarded as a mode of keeping in remembrance among the church on earth the name of the individual. The monument, Professor Ramsay considers, cannot be ascribed to a later date than A.D. 192, when the Montanist controversy was at its height. It is rather strange that Dean Luckock has not mentioned this in his work, as it is the most important evidence on his side.

Prayers for  
dead.

Peculiarity  
of the  
prayer.

Although there is little doubt that it was

Montanist  
move-  
ment.

of considerable importance that the church of that early time should be welded together more firmly by the introduction of episcopacy, we cannot but express sympathy in some measure for that earnest attempt to preserve the simplicity and freshness of the Christian life which was no doubt the strength of the Montanist movement. Unchristian bigotry seems to have been exhibited on both sides, and that bitterness of spirit thus engendered appears also in the epitaph of the great episcopal champion in the Church of Phrygia. He, whether living or dead, scorned to have the prayers of the other party. Sad to know that even in the day of martyrdom, when suffering together for Christ at the hands of the heathen, orthodox martyrs of an age not much later refused to have communion with their fellow-martyrs who belonged to the Montanist party. What a change in feeling would be produced in their souls when they discovered after death that they were both dear to the great Head of the Church, and were both admitted by free grace into his blessed Paradise to eat there for ever of the tree of life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See for authority Professor Ramsay's article in *The Expositor*, vol. ix. for 1889, *footnote*.

It might be well, however, ere leaving the allegory of Abercius, so strangely transformed by legend into a narrative in which not a little of what is essentially absurd is commingled with much which is substantially true, to give another illustration of the fact that Christian legends are in some cases simply allegories misunderstood.

Ambrose (who died 397) has preserved in his Letters (Lib. v. Epis. 19) a tradition derived from the writings of Origen (born A.D. 185, died A.D. 253), and mentioned also by Epiphanius (who died A.D. 404). According to that tradition, Adam, after his expulsion from Eden, wandered over the face of the earth, and died at Golgotha or Calvary, where his body was buried. When Christ, the second Adam, was crucified, and the blood from the cross fell upon the skull of the first Adam, which lay below, the latter arose from the dead, Christ having by that means bestowed upon him light (Eph. v. 14) and life. Considered as a legend, the record is here also replete with absurdities, but, regarded as an allegory, it is full of beauty. The Church Fathers regarded the story as a tradition which was in all probability true as a

Allegories  
misunder-  
stood.

Allegory of  
Adam.

matter of fact, and our great Archbishop Ussher, in his treatise often referred to, when writing of *Limbus Patrum* does not seem to understand the history as allegorical, although he points out other instances in which it was referred to by the ancient Church writers.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE INTERMEDIATE STATE AS DEPICTED IN CHRISTIAN APOCRYPHAL WRITINGS

#### § 1. Introductory Remarks

IN the previous chapter attention was drawn to the silence of the Apostolic Fathers on all questions concerning the intermediate state. Prayers for the dead originated, at least partly, from fanciful notions which by degrees sprung up in reference to the condition of the departed souls. The practice of prayers for the dead arose at first from small beginnings. Weeds, which spring up at first unperceived in earthly gardens, soon cover the face of the ground. Thus in like manner errors of various kinds have grown up silently and imperceptibly within the garden of the Lord. The Master often warned His disciples against this fatal tendency of human nature. The inspired writers of the

Prayers  
for dead  
sprung up  
gradually.

New Testament spoke often distinctly of the growth of corruption within the Church of Christ.

Growth  
of false  
doctrines.

The growth of false doctrines and of vain legends may, perhaps, be most distinctly noted in the mass of writings which gradually appeared after the Apostolic era, and which may be conveniently grouped together as Christian apocrypha. Those writings are inferior in every way to the Jewish apocryphal writings. The inspired books of the New Testament fall naturally under four distinct heads, Gospels, Acts, Epistles, with the Apocalypse or Revelation of St. John. The Christian apocrypha consist of professedly supplementary works ranged under those several departments. These strange and fabulous works are of considerable value to the student of Christian evidences. They show what kind of a Christ would have been presented to us, had men been left to their own imaginations to invent a Redeemer of mankind. The infancy and boyhood of Jesus is one of the grand topics on which those lovers of legend delighted to dilate. But the child and boy of the genuine Gospels is of a very different stamp

from the ill-tempered, malevolent wonder-worker depicted in the apocryphal Gospels.

Those Gospels in general do not speak of the Intermediate state. The exception to this statement is the Gospel of Nicodemus, which we shall have to notice at some length. The other Christian Apocrypha contain few points which are of eschatological importance. Under the head, however, of Apocalypses of various kinds, there are works of some significance. We do not profess to give any complete history of those books, but shall touch lightly upon a few of them, and shall begin with that work long supposed to be hopelessly lost, but which has been fortunately discovered in very recent times—namely, the Apocalypse of St. Peter.

Apocry-  
phal  
Apoca-  
lypses.

## § 2. The Apocalypse of Peter

The French Archæological Mission in Cairo unearthed in 1886 (in an ancient burial-place in Akhmîm, in Upper Egypt), a parchment book, probably written in the eighth century, which, on examination, was found to contain fragments of the Gospel of Peter, the Apocalypse

Discovery  
of Petrine  
Apocry-  
pha.

of Peter, and of the Book of Enoch. The first two books, which were well known by writers of the second century, had long been regarded as hopelessly lost. The Gospel of St. Peter, which exhibits traces of having been written by one who had imbibed Docetic opinions, contains nothing of importance touching upon our special subject.

The Mura-  
torian  
Fragment.

The fragment of the Apocalypse or Revelation of Peter, however, gives some vivid pictures of the life after death, of heaven and hell. Its descriptions have largely affected the later literature which treats of such matters. The Apocalypse of Peter was regarded by the writer of the so-called Muratorian fragment (a document itself probably of the eighth century, and possibly a copy of an original which may be as old as the latter part of the second), as "received" by the Church, though he notices that some objected to its being read in the Church. The book, however, seemed to have been highly popular, and was (according to Robinson and James) "still read in Church on Good Friday in the fifth century."

The Greek fragment of this apocalypse has

been repeatedly edited and translated.<sup>1</sup> It contains descriptions of the region which the blessed souls now inhabit, and of the place of the punishment of the wicked, for verses 4 and 14 distinctly imply that the vision vouchsafed to the Apostles was one of the Intermediate state, where the souls seen were those "who had gone forth out of the world."

Greek  
Apoca-  
lypse of  
Peter.

The region of the blessed is described as "a very great place (μέγιστον χωρον ἐκτὸς τούτου τοῦ κόσμου) outside the world." The words "paradise," or "heaven," do not actually occur in the fragment, but "the dwellers in that place were clad in the garment of shining angels," and angels hovered over them. The place was all glorious with light and fragrance, and unfading flowers and fruit abounded.

Region  
of the  
blessed.

No purgatory is described, nor is there any

No purga-  
tory.

<sup>1</sup> The more important editions are, perhaps, those of Harnack, *Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus*, Leipzig, 1893; and *Das Evangelium u. die Apokalypse des Petrus; Die neuentdeckten Bruchstücke nach einer Photographie der Handschrift zu Gizeh in Lichtdruck herausgegeben*, von Oscar von Gebhardt, 1893. Canon Armitage Robinson and Dr. M. R. James have also issued editions of both these so-called Petrine fragments, with English translations; and English translations of them are given in the additional volume of the Ante-Nicene Christian Library, edited by Professor A. Menzies, D.D., Edinburgh, 1897.

allusion to the Paradise spoken of as being a place of education, or of any disciplinary punishment. These points are especially noteworthy. There were evidently only two places thought of by the writer.

Punish-  
ment of  
the lost.

The place of punishment (τόπος κολάσεως) was "over against that other" (καταντικρὺς ἐκείνου), dark with angels with black raiments. There was in it a great lake of flaming mire; there were other places full of evil beasts, snakes, and worms (σκώληκες), "like clouds of darkness." There were women hanging by the hair of their heads, others sitting in gore up to their necks; men punished with red-hot irons, sharp pebbles, and boiling pitch, others being roasted and pitched down from great cliffs, and so forth.

Such were the ideas of the intermediate state popularly believed, at least by a large number of professed Christians, in the close of the second century after Christ.

### § 3. The Vision of St. Paul and other Apocryphal Apocalypses

In vol. ii. of the "Cambridge Texts and Studies," Dr. Montague Rhodes James published

the first series of "Apocrypha Anecdota, a Collection of Thirteen Apocryphal Books and Fragments, now first edited from Manuscripts" (Cambridge, 1893). The volume contains a Latin version of "The Vision of Paul." An English translation of that Latin version is given in the additional volume of the Ante-Nicene Library, alluded to in note, p. 225. Dr. Justin Perkins, the great missionary at Orûmiah to the Nestorians, in connection with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, published in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* for 1864 a translation of the Syriac version of the book, and his translation was republished in the *Journal of Sacred Literature*, edited by B. Harris Cowper, in January 1865.

Vision of  
St. Paul.

The Syriac version contains a remarkable preface, which is peculiar to that version. In it we find the following denunciation: "Whoever is doubtful of the Revelation of great Paul, let him know that there is no sacrifice for propitiation for his sins; but know thou that his torment shall be without mercy. Consider and count him one with the heathen, and persecutors of apostles and martyrs. Whoever believes not in the Reve-

Syriac  
version.

lation of the blessed Paul will suffer his torments within, till he goes to the torments of hell, in everlasting fire."

Transla-  
tion of Dr.  
Perkins.

The translation of Dr. Perkins was republished also by Tischendorf in his *Apocalypses Apocryphæ*. The Vision or Revelation of Paul was known to, and denounced as a forgery by, St. Augustine, and is mentioned by Sozomen (fifth century) in his "Ecclesiastical History."

Greek  
version.

Besides the Syriac version there is a Greek version, which is considerably shorter. Of this latter an English translation is given in the vol. of the Ante-Nicene Library which contains the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts and Revelations.

When dis-  
covered.

The Vision of St. Paul professes to have been discovered in Tarsus in the time of the Emperor Theodosius (A.D. 388), in a marble box found under the house in which St. Paul had resided—and, according to the tradition, was sent from thence to Jerusalem—*Credat Judæus!*

Paul's visit  
to Para-  
dise.

The book contains a description of St. Paul's visit to heaven and Paradise, mentioned in 2 Cor. xii. 1-6. It is unnecessary to give the descriptions of the Paradise of joy into which Paul was brought by the Archangel Michael,



or of Tartarus (§ 18), in which the wicked are punished with great torments till the great day of judgment. Paradise seems to be located in "the third heaven" (§ 19). The accounts of these places have more in common with heathen mythology than those found in the earlier non-inspired Jewish writings. For the Acherousian Lake is spoken of, and a baptism of converted fornicators and impious performed by Michael in its waters before those converts can enter "the city of Christ." The description of the city is noteworthy, though it is marred by accounts given of rivers of milk and honey, and oil and wine, which are worthy of an Indian legend.

And  
Tartarus.

There is one reference in this version to prayer offered for the dead. It occurs in § 24, where it is said that certain persons for a time shut outside the gates of the city are at last to be admitted. The angel there explains to Paul the reason of their being permitted at last to enter: "Because of the great goodness of God, and because there is the entry of his holy men entering into this city; for this is the cause they are left in this place, but when Christ the King Eternal enters

Prayer for  
the dead.

with his saints, as he enters just men may pray for these, and then they may enter into the city along with them: but yet none of them is able to have assurance such as they have who humbled themselves, serving the Lord God all their lives."

The reference to these prayers, however, distinctly proves that, even at the time of the composition of the *Vision*, prayers for the dead were not as popular as at a later period of the Church's history.

False  
doctrines  
taught  
in the  
"Vision of  
St. Paul."

The *Vision* contains much "strange doctrine" "opposed to the warranty of God's word." It speaks of "offering the host to the Lord at His holy altar" (§ 34), of those "who, when they have taken the body and blood of Christ, go and fornicate, and did not cease from their sins till they died" (§ 31). Such persons were seen by Paul "immersed up to their navel" in fire.

The description of the punishments of the lost is much more detailed than that given in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Evidently it was thought useful to give such horrid accounts in order to deter men from sinning in this world.

The compassion of the Son of God over

transgressors is spoken of in § 44. At the intercession of Michael, the angel of the covenant, and for the sake of St. Paul the well-beloved, Christ is represented as granting on Easter Day to all who are in punishment a night and a day's refreshment for ever. One cannot help noticing in passing that the compassionate ideas of the writer were very low indeed.

A compassionate Christ!

Such were the fantastic ideas of the so-called Christians in the fourth or fifth centuries. But it should be noted there is not one word in this curious book of a purgatory, and Paradise was not thought of by him as a place of disciplinary punishment or training.

No Purgatory.

The Apocalypse of the Virgin Mary is really of too late a period to belong properly to our present investigation, but as its Greek text is set forth in the same volume by Dr. M. R. James, and is translated in Dr. Menzies' volume, it may deserve a passing mention. It is to a large extent based on the former two Apocalypses. It seems to be a production of the ninth century, and abounds with horrifying descriptions of the torments of the lost. Men and women are described in it as suspended by their tongues

Apocalypse of the Virgin.

from iron trees. Others are chastised in flames, and devoured by monsters. When the Virgin Mary passed through the region of torment she was led in pity to intercede for them, and on account of her prayer and that of other saints, backed up by that of Michael the Archangel, the Lord granted them "to have rest on the day of Pentecost, to glorify the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit"!!

Such conceptions show the degraded ideas men had of such matters in those dark days. But it ought to be observed even those degenerate-minded inventors of Apocalypses have described only two places, Paradise and Hell. They had not yet learned generally to draw pictures of a Purgatory.

Apoca-  
lypse of  
Sedrach.

The Apocalypse of Sedrach is characterised by a somewhat higher tone of thought. That book, however, has but a slight bearing on the subject under discussion. In the mention incidentally made of Paradise, that region, however, is thought of as a place of bliss, and not as a place of disciplinary purgation.

§ 4. *The Gospel of Nicodemus*

As we do not pretend to give by any means an exhaustive list of New Testament apocrypha, we may now proceed to notice briefly the Gospel of Nicodemus, which has been appealed to by Dean Plumptre as supporting his interpretation of the passages in 1 Peter iii., which we have discussed in an earlier part of our work.

Plumptre  
appeals to  
Gospel of  
Nico-  
demus.

In speaking of this apocryphon we shall avail ourselves of what has been already set forth in our "Biblical Essays."

It is well known that the name of "Gospel of Nicodemus," by which this compilation of legends is known, does not appear to have been generally given to the book before the thirteenth century. It is composed of some six different documents, which purport to narrate the Acts of Pilate and the Descent of Christ into Hades. There are two Greek forms extant and one Latin of the former work; and of the Descent into Hades there are extant one Greek and two Latin forms. All these are somewhat different from one another. The Acts of Pilate may go back to the third century A.D., in which century that

The name  
of that  
apocry-  
phon.

miserable governor was a frequent theme of legendary stories. The Descent into Hades may be somewhat earlier, although that is a matter of considerable doubt. Tischendorf thought that the compilation might possibly have been derived from an ancient apocryphal gospel of the second century; and Dean Plumptre seized hold of that opinion of Tischendorf in order to show that "the antiquity of the belief which the legend presupposes" may be traced back to the sub-apostolic period.

Tischen-  
dorf's  
opinion.

Tischendorf's opinion, set forth in the Prolegomena to his edition of the *Evangelia Apocrypha*, published in 1853, was based upon the idea that the Acts of Pilate, referred to by Justin Martyr and other early Christian writers, may, perhaps, be identified with the first part of the Gospel. The identification has, however, been disputed; and critical opinion is rather in favour of assigning this apocryphal book to the third, or even the fifth century, after Christ.

The de-  
scend into  
Hades,]

The second portion of the Gospel of Nicodemus, as we have it, professes to give an account of the descent of our Lord into Hades. It

describes, in language borrowed to a large extent from the old Hebrew prophets,<sup>1</sup> the manner in which Christ rescued from the power of Hades "the patriarchs and prophets, and forefathers of the Old Testament" (Part ii. chap. 8). The Report of Pilate states that when our Lord ascended from the dead, angels innumerable were seen in the air, crying out, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, among men goodwill: Come up out of Hades, ye who have been kept in slavery in the underground regions of Hades." And all the multitude in Jerusalem walked about, and sang praises to God with a loud voice, saying: "The Lord our God that hath risen from the dead hath brought to life all the dead, and has plundered Hades, and put him to death."

The book that records such marvels relates also that Michael the Archangel escorted the risen saints into Paradise, where they were met by Enoch and Elijah, and where also the Penitent Thief was found, who had entered into Paradise carrying the sign of the Cross.

<sup>1</sup> As Isaiah xxv. 7, 8; xxvi. 19; Hosea xiii. 14; Ps. xxiv. 7-10; and cvii. 16.

Importance of book.

There is no necessity to recount further such legends. But we may call attention to the fact that there is no mention made in the book of a purgatory; that, although the righteous before Christ are represented in the bonds of Hades, they are not said to have received disciplinary treatment while under that power. The Paradise into which they were admitted after the resurrection of the Redeemer is spoken of as a place of perfect repose. No mention is made of prayers for the dead; and, what may be to some more remarkable, even in this legendary compilation (and the book is a comparatively lengthy one), there is not the slightest reference made to Christ's preaching to the rebels of the antediluvian world. Those rebels were "the spirits in prison" of which St. Peter speaks. But although the descent into Hades is pictured, the preaching of the Lord in Hades to those lost souls is not alluded to. The omission clearly shows that at the time of the composition of this strange book the Church did not entertain the idea that Christ preached in the Unseen to the sinners who were overwhelmed at the deluge in acts of rebellion and unbelief.



The Church may, indeed, have believed that the Redeemer's entrance into the spirit-world produced a mighty effect in the regions of the dead; but there is no evidence to show that she put that interpretation on 1 Pet. iii. 19 which modern scholars have insisted on. Further, there is no evidence whatever that there was any tradition current in the early Church on that point, which cannot directly be traced up to that remarkable passage in 1 Peter iii.

The belief  
of the  
Church.

## CHAPTER IX

### HELL IN THE WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS —PURGATORY AND HELL AS PORTRAYED IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Church  
Fathers on  
Hades.

Influenced  
by heathen  
poets.

THE opinions concerning Hades, set forth in the writings of the early Church Fathers, were based on statements in the Scriptures, which were interpreted in too literal a signification. Those writers were also largely influenced by the pictures of the Unseen world painted in the works of the Greek and Roman classical authors. The heathen poets gave fuller accounts of the abodes of the blessed, and of the dwellings of the wicked, than were vouchsafed in the Scriptures. And it was supposed by some of the Fathers that the heathen poets derived information on those subjects from the demons they worshipped, and that the information imparted was substantially true.

It is not our purpose to examine minutely into

such curious points. But we may be permitted to give one or two extracts from early Church Fathers on the punishments of the lost, as introductory to darker pictures of those punishments held even to-day by many who "profess and call themselves Christians."

It is uncertain whether Minutius Felix lived before or after the age of Tertullian. The latter Minutius Felix and Tertullian. Church Father flourished sometime between A.D. 193 and A.D. 213. There are many passages strikingly similar in the writings of these two Fathers, so similar that one or other must have been a borrower. If Tertullian borrowed from Minutius Felix, Minutius Felix must have lived about A.D. 166; but if the reverse be true, Minutius Felix must have been a writer of the early part of the third century.

Minutius Felix, according to Jerome, was an advocate at Rome prior to his conversion. His dialogue entitled "Octavius" is a book worthy to be read and studied. That dialogue in defence of Christianity abounds in passages which are both vigorous and of great beauty. But among much that is admirable, there occurs the following terrible account of the "eternal torments" of

the wicked in the future state of existence. He says (Chap. xxxv.) :—

Description of Hell in his "Octavius."

"Nor is there either measure or termination to these torments. There the intelligent fire burns the limbs and restores them, feeds on them and nourishes them. As the fires of the thunderbolts strike upon the bodies, and do not consume them ; as the fires of Mount Etna and of Mount Vesuvius, and of burning lands everywhere, glow, but are not wasted ; so that penal fire is not fed by the waste of those who burn, but is nourished by the unexhausted eating away of their bodies. But that they who know not God are deservedly tormented as impious, as unrighteous persons, no one except a profane man hesitates to believe, since it is not less wicked to be ignorant of, than to offend, the Parent of all and the Lord of all."

Bad as this passage is, it is inferior to the more minute descriptions of torments already quoted from various Christian Apocalypses. See Chapter VIII.

Tertullian on Public Shows.

Tertullian, however, in his tract *De Spectaculis*, § 30, far surpasses Minutius Felix. For, in the eloquent passage with which that striking treatise terminates, he even regards the torments of the lost as being a source of enjoyment to the redeemed !

His words are :—

"But what a spectacle is that fast-approaching advent of our Lord, now owned by all, now highly exalted, now a triumphant One ! What that exultation of the angelic hosts ! What the

glory of the rising saints! What the kingdom of the just thereafter! What the city of New Jerusalem! Yes, and there are other sights: that last day of judgment, with its everlasting issues; that day unlooked for by the nations, the theme of their derision, when the world, hoary with age, and all its many products, shall be consumed in one great flame! How vast a spectacle then bursts upon the eye! What there excites my admiration? what my derision? Which sight gives me joy? which raises me to exultation?—as I see so many illustrious monarchs, whose reception into the heavens was publicly announced, groaning now in the lowest darkness with great Jove himself, and those, too, who bore witness of their exaltation; governors of provinces, too, who persecuted the Christian name, in fires more fierce than those with which in the days of their pride they raged against the followers of Christ! What world's wise men besides, the very philosophers, in fact, who taught their followers that God had no concern in ought that is sublunary, and were wont to assure them that either they had no souls, or that they would never return to the bodies which at death they had left, now covered with shame before the poor deluded ones, as one fire consumes them! Poets also, trembling not before the judgment-seat of Rhadamanthus or Minos, but of the unexpected Christ! I shall have a better opportunity then of hearing the tragedians, louder-voiced in their own calamity; of viewing the play-actors, much more dissolute in the dissolving flame; of looking upon the charioteer, all glowing in his chariot of fire; of witnessing the wrestlers, not in their gymnasia, but tossing in the fiery billows: unless even then I shall not care to attend to such ministers of sin, in my eager wish rather to fix a gaze insatiable on those whose fury vented itself against the Lord. ‘This,’ I shall say, ‘this is that carpenter’s or harlot’s son, that Sabbath-breaker, that Samaritan and devil-possessed! This is He whom you purchased from Judas! This is He

Christians  
described  
as glorying  
over the  
lost.

whom you struck with reed and fist, whom you contemptuously spat upon, to whom you gave gall and vinegar to drink ! This is He whom His disciples secretly stole away, that it might be said He had risen again ; or the gardener abstracted, that his lettuces might come to no harm from the crowds of visitants !' What quæstor or priest in his munificence will bestow on you the favour of seeing and exulting in such things as these ! And yet even now we in a measure have them by faith in the picturings of imagination. But what are the things which eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and which have not so much as dimly dawned upon the human heart ? Whatever they are they are nobler, I believe, than the circus, and both theatres, and every racecourse." <sup>1</sup>

Savage  
"pictur-  
ings of  
imagina-  
tion."

We who sit at ease in comfortable houses, and do not now shiver with terror at the contemplation of being any moment dragged off to torture at the discretion of barbarous judges, rightly condemn all such horrid anticipations. As we call to mind the tears dropped by the Saviour over Jerusalem below, on account of the sorrows attendant on its terrible siege, which lasted merely for a time, we may well marvel at persons, professing to be the followers of a meek and lowly Redeemer, savagely exulting in such "picturings of imagination." The reproof

<sup>1</sup> We have availed ourselves in the above quotations of the excellent English translation afforded in the volume of the Ante-Nicene Library so often referred to.

of the Saviour to the less cruelly-minded sons of Zebedee ever ring in our ears: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke ix. 35).

It is well, however, to comprehend the feelings of the men of olden days, in order that we may understand the legacy which they bequeathed to the men of later times. When modern writers, unmindful of the past, condemn as "fiendish" the far less objectionable productions of Calvin, or of Richard Baxter, and censure those great men in unmeasured language for their retention of some of the evil spirit "inherited by tradition from their forefathers," it is right to look back to the rock from which such ideas were originally hewn, and to the pit from which such conceptions were dug up.

Men of  
olden days.

But darker and more horrible pictures have been drawn than those quoted from the Fathers, or than any which can be quoted from the writings of the Puritans, who, to do them justice, never exhibited any tendency to rejoice over the torments of the lost; although they considered it their duty to warn those committed to their care of "the misery of those who lose the saints' everlasting rest."

Puritans  
unjustly  
blamed.

Council of  
Trent on  
purgatory.

The Church of Rome in her authoritative documents, such as the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, has not indeed drawn such revolting pictures. In setting forth her unscriptural dogma of "purgatory," the Fathers of Trent were careful to use moderate language. They affirmed in their twenty-fifth session that there was a purgatory, and that the souls detained in that prison were helped by the suffrages of the faithful. The Council further decreed that "the sound doctrine (*sanam doctrinam*), handed down by the Holy Fathers and the Sacred Councils," should be adhered to, and everywhere set forward. But the Council did not distinctly define what purgatory was. It uttered a vague warning against superstition on that subject, and specially cautioned the priests against all which "savoured of filthy lucre." All such points should be carefully avoided. The Council, further, discountenanced the discussion of "more difficult and subtle questions which did not tend to edification."

Catechism  
of Council  
of Trent.

The Catechism of the Council, drawn up later by a commission duly appointed by the Council, and which was finally endorsed by



the Papal bull, went, however, further. That Catechism affirms that "there is a purgatorial fire (*purgatorius ignis*) in which the souls of the pious tormented (*cruciatæ*) for a definite time are expiated, that an entrance may be opened for them into the eternal country, in which nothing stained can enter. And concerning the truth of this doctrine, the Sacred Councils declare that it is confirmed by the testimonies of the Scriptures, and by Apostolic tradition; therefore it ought to be more diligently and more often discoursed about by the parish priest, because we have fallen upon those times in which men do not endure sound doctrine" (Pars. i., cap. vi. 5).

The "parish priests," and especially the members of the Society of Jesus, have proved themselves nothing loth to do their duty in this particular. What a purgatory they set forth, and what a purgatory is still depicted at the close of the nineteenth century we will now point out. We quote from a new edition of "two fine old books on purgatory," republished by an accredited Roman Catholic publisher so late as 1893.<sup>1</sup>

Purgatory  
as taught  
by "parish  
priests."

<sup>1</sup> "Two Ancient Treatises on Purgatory. 'A Remembrance for the Living to pray for the Dead,' by Father James Mumford, S.J.; and

Doctrine  
now  
avowed in  
Church of  
England.

The doctrine of a purgatory is now avowed by many clergymen in the Church of England, notwithstanding that such doctrine is repudiated in that old-fashioned exposition of Anglican faith termed the Thirty-nine Articles (see Article xxii.). But that profession of faith which all the English clergy, before admission to Holy Orders or to any benefice in the Church, must duly subscribe, the worthy gentlemen in question profess to regard as obsolete. The book, therefore, mentioned below may soon be recommended for the use of the faithful in the Church of England.

“Church  
Patient  
in Purga-  
tory.”

In the “Remembrance for the Living” it is stated (p. 46) that “the Church Patient in Purgatory” consists only of those who are “heirs-apparent to the Kingdom of Heaven, though their offences (which be their greatest enemies) have left them for a time abandoned to insufferable torments.” Also that “it is an opinion not improbable, that the very least torment in Purgatory doth surpass the very greatest in this

‘Purgatory Surveyed,’ by Father Richard Thimelby, S.J.” London: Burns & Oates, Limited, 1893. In the introduction to the volume, signed “John Morris, S.J.,” a brief account of these two “worthy” authors is given.

world." "Yea, St. Thomas, prince of the divines, doth prove this to be most true" (p. 3). Moreover, "the torments of Purgatory, for the time they last, be as grievous as the torments of Hell" (p. 4). These opinions, indeed, are not "articles of faith, for then they were not opinions" (*id.*).

In the "Remembrance for the Living" we therefore read on p. 5 :—

"Perhaps all the other torments which our world hath can scarce so bitterly torture a poor creature as it would be tortured, if it were possible for us to be kept without consuming in the midst of the merciless flames of a glass furnace, the fire of which would soon, as it were, penetrate itself into the very inmost parts of that afflicted wretch; his bones would glow like red-hot bars of iron, his marrow would scorch him more fiercely than melted lead, his blood would boil more furiously than high seething oil, his nails, his teeth, his gristles, his very skull would be like plates of bright flaming brass, all a burning fire. But alas! dear brother, there be many differences between our hottest fires and the scorching flames of Purgatory."

Torments  
of Purga-  
tory.

The author calculates arithmetically that "an innocent man—not a man, but a youth—doth commit 36,500 sins all in ten years." Hence, before he comes "to be a middle-aged man," he has a score of 73,000. He further computes that if

Calcula-  
tion of sins  
committed  
by men.

the poor wretch has not fully satisfied for the odd three thousand he will have a horrible lot of misery to endure in Purgatory (see p. 16). He therefore recommends most prudently, for the man's own sake, and for the Church's profit, that he provide himself with "Indulgences" which are "one of the great mercies of God, which in how great need we stand of, any man of judgment will see clearly by this whole discourse, but such is either the infidelity or strange carelessness of most men (especially of such as have most need), that perhaps the gross neglect of them may well be reckoned for one of the chief causes why so many broil so long in the flames of Purgatory" (p. 19).

Indul-  
gences.

This is indeed a prudent suggestion. Our Ritualist friends ought to have their eyes open to the great need they have of "Indulgences," and to see that their followers be duly provided against such a terrible contingency as the "fine old" writer here warns against!

Prayers for  
dead said  
to be valu-  
able.

The efficacy, and tremendous importance, of "prayers for the dead" are spoken of at length, by which "Heaven is given and Purgatory pains forgiven to a poor soul [who is thereby] made

of a most pitiable prisoner a most glorious saint" (p. 51).

We close our extracts with quoting from "Purgatory Surveyed" the following description:—

"Purgatory Surveyed" by a Jesuit.

"You must then conceive Purgatory to be a vast, darksome, and hideous chaos, full of fire and flames, in which the souls are kept close prisoners until they have fully satisfied for all their misdemeanours, according to the estimate of divine justice. For God hath made choice of this element of fire wherewith to punish souls, because it is the most active, sensible, and insupportable of all others. But that which quickens it indeed and gives it more life is this, that it acts as the instrument of God's justice, who, by His omnipotent power, heightens and reinforces its activity as He pleases, and so makes it capable to act upon bodiless spirits" (p. 131).

"Good God! how the great saints and doctors astonish me when they treat of this fire and of the pain of sense as they call it. For they peremptorily pronounce that the fire that purges those souls, those both happy and unhappy souls, surpasses all the torments which are to be found in this miserable life of man, or are possible to be invented; for so far they go. Out of which assertion it clearly follows that the furious fits of the stone fever, or raging gout, the tormenting colic, with all the horrible convulsions of the worst of diseases, nay, though you join racks, girdirons, boiling oils, wild beasts, and a hundred horses drawing several ways and tearing one limb from another, with all the other hellish devices of the most barbarous and cruel tyrants, all this does not reach to the least part of the mildest pains in Purgatory."

This is indeed an awful description invented to frighten miserable wretches on earth, and to induce them to pay liberally for "Indulgences" for themselves and for their deceased friends, and to have frequent resource to "masses," for they are supposed to be so useful to both "the living and the dead."

Children  
terrorised.

We close with briefly pointing out the manner in which even poor children are terrified by the pictures presented to them by the "kind good priests" who are set over them to instruct them in matters concerning the kingdom of heaven.

There lies before us a series of fourteen small penny books entitled, "Books for Children and for First Communions, Missions, Retreats, and Sunday Schools." Published "permissu Superiorum" at Dublin by James Duffy & Co., Limited, 14 and 15 Wellington Quay. Their author is the Rev. J. Furniss, C.S.S.R. They have no date, but the official "permission" proves them to be quite recent.<sup>1</sup>

"Father"  
Furniss.

In Book iii., "The Great Question," there is

<sup>1</sup> All the books have "permissu Superiorum" on their respective title-pages. At the back of the title-page of Book xiv. is printed, "Nihil obstat. C. P. Meehan, *Cens. Dep.* Imprimatur. ✠ Gulielmus J. Walsh, Archiepiscopus Dubliniensis, H. Primas."

an account of a "visit to purgatory, by St. Catherine. It is as follows :—

St. Catherine's visit to purgatory.

"When the doors of purgatory were opened to St. Catherine and the angel, the first thing she saw was fire! Never before had she seen such dreadful, raging, piercing, tormenting fire—a fire which penetrated and burnt the inmost soul. It seemed as if the flames of Hell could not burn more fiercely than the flames of Purgatory. 'The arrows of the Lord are in me, and the rage of them drinketh up my spirit' (Job vi.). She saw many countless multitudes, thick as the leaves of the forest, burning in the flames of Purgatory. She saw there even some who had lived most holy lives in the world. There are few, very few, who go to Heaven, without first going to Purgatory. 'For if the stars are not pure in His sight, how much less the soul of mortal man' (Job xxv.). All these souls looked most patient in their sufferings and resigned to the will of God. . . . She saw that in the midst of their suffering they had many other consolations. They knew that God loved them, and was with them (Ps. xxiii.). They knew that their suffering would sometime come to an end; many times they were gladdened by the visits of the dear angels of Heaven, who refreshed them, as the dews of the night refresh the thirsty plants, or as when Jesus was in an agony of suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, and His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground. Then there appeared to Him an angel from Heaven giving Him strength (Luke xxii.); or as when Jesus Himself, after His death on the cross, went and spoke kind words to His dear souls in Purgatory" (1 Peter iii.) (p. 9).

"She saw also that great number of souls were delivered from Purgatory, because some one on earth had gone round the Stations, or the Way of the Cross for them, and had prayed

S

St. Catherine on Indulgences in purgatory.

that the precious blood of Jesus Christ spilt on that sorrowful Way might be instead of the sufferings of the poor souls in Purgatory. 'The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John i.). She saw that the prayers for which the Church has given indulgences for the souls in Purgatory did wonderful things. 'Whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven' (Matt. xviii.). For example, the prayer 'Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul,' for which there are a hundred days of indulgence for the soul in Purgatory. Sometimes a little child on earth offered some good work for the souls in Purgatory. One child would say, 'My Jesus, for the love of you, I am going to learn my school lessons, and I offer this for the souls in Purgatory' (p. 10).

"St. Catherine listened to their complaints, and she heard them complaining that people in the world had forgotten to pray for them. Some had given orders for masses to be said for them, and those masses had not been said. There were also parents in purgatory for whom their children on earth had forgotten to pray" (p. 11).

Prayers for dead help out of the fire!

"It was most beautiful to see how those souls left Purgatory and went to Heaven. Suddenly an angel from Heaven, enlightened with the glory of God, would come into Purgatory, and he would say that there was a soul whose sufferings were ended, and God wished it to come to Heaven. Then each soul would hope that, perhaps, itself might be that happy soul. Now the angel makes known which soul is to be delivered out of Purgatory. 'Blessed soul,' says he, 'many years more of torments waited for you, but some one on earth prayed for you; and now by the command of our merciful God, you are free'" (p. 12).

This may suffice to show the ordinary teaching of the priests of the Church of Rome on



the subject, and how they have fulfilled the directions given in the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, and in the Catechism set forth by that august Council.

Ordinary  
teachings  
of Roman  
priests.

But inasmuch as the torments of Purgatory are equal to the torments of Hell, with the exception that their duration is not eternal, to understand the torments of Purgatory aright one must take a glimpse at Hell also.

Such a glimpse "Father" Furniss vouchsafes to afford his readers. One of his nice little tracts is entitled "Book X.—The Sight of Hell," also be it noted, "permissu Superiorum." The descriptions in the book, as might be expected, are most horrible; and we need only quote a few extracts. The child is bidden on p. 7 :—

"Father"  
Furniss's  
glimpses  
of Hell.

"Take a spark out of the kitchen fire, throw it into the sea, and it will go out. Take a little spark out of Hell, less than a pin-head, throw it into the ocean, it will not go out. In one moment it would dry up all the waters of the ocean, and set the whole world in a blaze."

On p. 13 we read of St. Teresa, who visited Hell :—

St. Teresa's  
visit to  
Hell.

"St. Teresa found herself squeezed into a hole or chest in the wall. Here the walls, which were most terrible, seemed to

close upon her and strangle her. She found her soul burning in a most horrible fire. It seemed as if some one was always tearing her soul in pieces, or rather as if the soul was always tearing itself in pieces. It was impossible to sit or lie down, for there was no room. . . . As soon as the soul is fixed in its place it finds two devils, one on each side of it. . . . One is called the striking devil, the other the mocking devil (p. 13).

"The striking devil."

"Little child, if you go to Hell, there will be a devil at your side to strike you. He will go on striking you every day for ever and ever, without ever stopping. The first stroke will make your body as bad as Job, covered from head to foot with sores and ulcers. The second stroke will make your body twice as bad as the body of Job. The third stroke will make your body three times as bad as the body of Job. The fourth stroke will make your body four times as bad as the body of Job. How then will your body be after the devil has been striking it every moment for a hundred millions of years without stopping?" (pp. 13, 14).

"The bed of fire."

On p. 15 "a bed of fire" is described, and the child is exhorted to think what it will be "when the body has been lying on the same side on the scorching, broiling fire for a hundred millions of years?"

"Now look at that body lying on a bed of fire. All the body is salted with fire. The fire burns through every bone and every muscle. Every nerve is trembling and quivering with the sharp fire. The fire rages inside the skull, it shoots through the eyes, it drops through the ears, it

roars in the throat as it roars up a chimney. So will mortal sin be punished. Yet there are people in their senses who commit mortal sin ! ”

On p. 17 and following pages the dungeons of Hell are pictured. In the first dungeon the child is directed to look and :—“ see in the midst of it there is a girl, perhaps about eighteen years old. What a terrible dress she has on—her dress is made of fire. On her head she wears a bonnet of fire. It is pressed down close over her head ; it burns her head, it burns into the skin, it scorches the bones of the skull, and makes it smoke. The red-hot fiery heat burns into the brain and melts it. . . . Think what a headache that girl must have. But see more ! she is wrapped up in flames, for her frock is fire. If she were on the earth she would be burnt to a cinder in a moment, but she is in Hell, where fire burns everything, but burns nothing away. There she stands burning and scorched, there she will stand forever burning and scorched. . . . When that girl was alive, she never thought about God or her soul, she cared only for one thing, and that was dress ! Instead of going to mass on Sundays she went about the town and the parks to show

“The dress  
of fire.”

off her dress. She disobeyed her father and mother by going to dancing-houses and all kinds of bad places to show off her dress. And now her dress is her punishment" (p. 18).

The second dungeon described is "the deep pit," the third is "the red-hot floor," the fourth is "the boiling kettle," the fifth is "the red-hot oven." From the opening of the latter chapter, on p. 21, we cull the following:—

The little  
child in  
Hell.

"You are going again to see the child about which you read in the 'Terrible Judgment'<sup>1</sup> that it was condemned to Hell. See, it is a pitiful sight; the little child is in this red-hot oven. Hear how it screams to come out. See how it turns and twists itself about in the fire. It beats its head against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet on the floor of the oven. You can see on the face of the little child what you see in all the faces of all in Hell—despair, desperate and horrible!"

"This child," writes "Father" Furniss, "committed very bad mortal sins, knowing well the harm of what it was doing, and knowing that Hell would be the punishment. God was very good to this little child. Very likely God knew that this child would get worse and worse, and would never repent, and so would have to be punished much more in Hell. So God in His mercy called it out of the world in its early childhood" (p. 21).

"Hell  
opened."

We were going to quote from "Hell Opened,"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Book IX. is entitled "The Terrible Judgment and the Bad Child."

<sup>2</sup> "Hell Opened to Christians," to caution them from entering into it. From the Italian of the Rev. Fr. Pinnamonti, S.J. Dublin: James

a book sold by the thousand in Ireland, which is illustrated with woodcuts of the punishments in Hell. But we think our readers have had enough, and more than enough. Such is the garbish, and worse than garbish, which Rome provides for the souls of intelligent men, women, and children in Ireland. Men educated to believe such fables are quite ready to act as persecutors. If the God they profess to serve is so cruel, and His punishments are so fearful, why need we find fault with all the horrors perpetrated on poor human sufferers by the myrmidons of the Inquisition. Their tortures were, after all, only for a short time; these supposed torturings never end.

Such “whips and scourges” of the imagination may be necessary to impel men and women to diligence in the man-imposed work of praying for the dead! The inculcation of prayers for the dead has more or less been generally followed by teaching of a similar character. The gross

“Whips  
and  
scourges.”

Duffy & Co., Ltd., 14 and 15 Wellington Quay. This twopenny tract forms No. xvi. of Duffy's weekly volumes of “Catholic Divinity.” On the back of the title-page there is the usual “Nihil Obstat, G. P. Meehan, *Cens. Dep.* Imprimatur. ✠ Gulielmus J. Walsh, *Archiepiscopus Dubliniensis, H. Primas.*” It has eight villainous woodcuts.

misinterpretation of passages in the Old Testament Scriptures, copiously made use of in these sensational tracts, *permissu Superiorum*, need only be alluded to. Those misinterpretations are too glaring to require serious refutation.

## CHAPTER X

### THE SO-CALLED "TEST OF CATHOLICITY"

THE "Test of Catholicity" is the heading of the opening chapter of Dean Luckock's work Dr. Luckock's book. "After Death." In the course of that chapter the Dean states that the changes made in the Church of England at the Reformation fall under three heads. (1) There were some doctrines held by the Church of England prior to that era which are there openly and authoritatively condemned; (2) others, together with the forms in which they had found expression, were discarded from public worship on the grounds of expediency; while (3) a third class, though not formally forbidden, fell into disfavour, and went out of use in the general neglect which ensued.

The correctness of Dr. Luckock's classification may be seriously questioned, but to do so lies Classification disputed. outside the scope of the present work. The Dean has not distinctly stated under which of

The importance of the Homilies of the Church of England.

those three heads he considers "prayers for the dead" ought to be placed. All the prayers for the dead which were found in the public Liturgy of the Church, together with all the invocations of saints departed this life, were, during the course of the Reformation in England, deliberately removed from the Liturgy of the Church of England; and, further, all prayers for the dead, public or private, were condemned as unnecessary in the Homilies set forth by the authority of the Church. The two Books of the Homilies were designed not merely for temporary use, but were intended to express more fully the opinions of the Church on several matters of importance. Hence in the XI. Article reference is made to the Homily of Justification (or of the Salvation of mankind) "as more largely" treating of that important subject; while the XXXV. Article endorses the general teaching of the two Books of the Homilies as containing "a godly and wholesome doctrine," and "necessary for these times," and orders that the said Homilies "be read in churches by the ministers diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people."



The "Test of Catholicity" which the Dean of Lichfield seeks to apply to the subject of prayers for the dead is "the testimony of the Church up to the Council of Chalcedon," that is, to A.D. 451. According to his theory, "everything must be brought to the test of acceptance in the undivided Church, because the power of interpreting and defining can only be exercised by a Church at unity in itself. Divided and rent into portions, she loses authority as she loses universality."

Dr.  
Luckock's  
test.

This statement may appear to some safe and moderate, but underneath its phrases there lurk almost as many assumptions as there are sentences. The oft-quoted "Canon of Vincentius" (died 450),<sup>1</sup> although its terms be limited to the "Catholic Church" (*in ipsa Catholica ecclesia*), is in itself obscure, and has no real bearing upon our subject. A rule or canon, to be of any value, should be expressed in clear and unmistakable terms. But the more

Canon of  
Vincen-  
tius.

<sup>1</sup> In ipsa item Catholica Ecclesia magnopere curandum est ut id teneamus *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*. Hoc est etenim vere proprieque Catholicum, quod ipsa vis nominis ratioque declarat, quæ omnia fere universaliter comprehendit. Sed hoc ita demum fiet, si sequamur *universitatem, antiquitatem, consensionem*.—*Vicentii Lirenensis Commonitorium*, Cap. ii. 6.

closely the terms of the Vincentian Canon be examined, the more indefinite each one of its clauses seem to be. The *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum*, "that which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all," is in all those three points vague and indefinite. The "canon" is therefore of little value as a test of either doctrine or practice; for instead of being a true light to lighten the path, it is rather a will-o'-the-wisp, which is certain to involve one who is led by it in a wearisome chase hither and thither, and only too likely to leave him at last in a bog from which he cannot easily be extricated.

Growth in  
opinions.

Even the most superficial study of Church history is sufficient to show that from the Apostolic days up to our own times there has been a steady growth, from century to century, in all the various departments of doctrine, ritual, legend, and Church government. This is exactly what might have been expected, because the visible Church is a living organism, and consequently she was compelled by circumstances to expand her dogmas by explanations of her faith, to enlarge and modify her ritual to meet the

wants of her members, and to change her customs and manner of government according to her needs, real or imaginary. In the eyes of outward observers, the Church in its earliest days was little more than a sect of Judaism. Its arrangements and forms of government at the outset were such as suited that initial stage of existence.

Thus, offices which were in existence in Apostolic times, and spoken of as "appointed by God," ceased to exist after a few years. Those offices were, no doubt, useful when instituted, and for equally good reasons were permitted to pass away after a while. The seventy disciples, appointed by Christ Himself for a very special object, are not mentioned outside of St. Luke's Gospel (Luke x. 1 ff.). Other offices mentioned by St. Paul as of great utility vanished so completely, that their names alone, and not their functions, remain on record. One may note the differences between the lists of offices, or officers, in 1 Cor. xii. 28, and in Eph. iv. 11, 12. The Divine institution of an office, and its importance at a particular crisis, does not necessarily imply that the office thus instituted was intended to be always retained in the Church.

Offices in  
Apostolic  
times not  
continued.

Germ of  
the epis-  
copate.

Men are likely up to the Second Advent of Christ to discuss the nature of the Apostolate which the Master instituted. It is very doubtful whether the Apostles, as a body, were entrusted with more extensive powers than had been possessed by such Old Testament prophets as Elijah or Elisha. The episcopate in its germ may possibly be traced upwards to St. John ; but nothing worthy of the name of evidence can be adduced to prove that that office, in its earliest form, had much in common with the episcopate of later Church history.

Church in  
second  
century.

In the process of time, however, the marvellous "powers of the world to come," or of the Christian dispensation, ceased to be manifested in the Church of God. Miracles gradually died out. The voices of the "God-inspired prophets," whether apostles or others, were no longer heard in the assemblies of believers. The generation of those who had "seen the Lord" passed away. But within the pale of the Christian Church, almost from its beginning, as in the Jewish Church in pre-Messianic days, were found false prophets, or teachers of erroneous doctrines, side by side with teachers who knew and upheld "the

truth of the Gospel" (Gal. ii. 14). Even the Apostles themselves were constantly compelled to denounce the frequent departures from the simplicity of the faith on the part of Christian believers educated under Jewish or Gentile influences.

The Church was called upon to be on its watch against the workings of "the spirit of error," as well as to be ready to receive "with all readiness of mind" the teachings of "the spirit of truth."

The spirit of error in Apostolic times.

St. Paul, in an early stage of his missionary course, solemnly denounced those who by practising circumcision (Gal. v. 1-4), and by teaching the observance of days and months and years (Gal. iv. 9, 10), were perverting the Gospel of Christ. Far from recognising any inherent right in the Church to put forth new doctrines of the faith, that Apostle denounced in solemn words the false teaching of his day. "There are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which is preached unto you, let him be anathema" (Gal. i. 7, 8).

Nor did St. Paul stand alone in thus insisting upon the importance of adhering to the original

Growth of  
false doc-  
trines.

faith, whether set forth in the facts of Christ's personal history (Luke i. 2), or in the doctrines which resulted from those facts (Gal. iii. 13, 14). St. John was equally emphatic when he warned the Church not to believe every spirit, but to prove the spirits whether they were of God (1 John iv. 1-6). And yet the latter Apostle definitely and distinctly taught that every true believer had a Divine anointing, which would teach "concerning all things" (1 John ii. 27). Christ had promised, and the promise is one which must not be limited to the Apostles, or to their pretended "successors," that the Spirit would come and teach all things (John xiv. 26), and "guide into all truth" (John xvi. 13). St. John warned the faithful even against receiving as guests into their houses any who brought not "this teaching" (2 John 10). St. Peter, ignorant of the theory that there was an authority vested in the Church, which might be implicitly relied on in "controversies of faith," states: "But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that

bought them" (2 Pet. ii. 1). St. Jude's warning is no isolated one, and he wrote exhorting "to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

The "test of Catholicity," therefore, in a Church which, from the very beginning, had been constantly warned against apostasy within her pale, is a test which requires to be used with great caution. Much was, no doubt, effected in the way of checking the undergrowth of error by the definitions of the Creeds, and by the decisions of General Councils, but notwithstanding all those efforts, the Church did not long retain Apostolic purity of doctrine. Long before the Council of Chalcedon, the Church had in many particulars departed from "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." Erroneous interpretations of Scripture had steadily grown up. The spread of impurity of doctrine and practice was almost as rapid as the growth of legends. The ever-increasing number of legends may be to some measure estimated by a comparison even of the apocryphal Gospels with the canonical Gospels of the New Testament. Despite the apparent unity

The test of Catholicity an uncertain test.

T

of the Church, there was a general spread of corruption throughout her ranks.

The  
Church  
not pure in  
the third  
century.

Considerations such as these are completely left out of sight by Dean Luckock and the school of theology to which he belongs. Notwithstanding the inspired prophecies, which speak of an apostasy in the Church itself, and of the sad facts of ecclesiastical history, it is taken for granted, without any evidence to support the assumption, that the Church was pure in her teaching up to at least A.D. 451. The Dean says :—

“From the beginning the Church was the keeper of Holy Writ, and therefore the rightful exponent of its teaching. Christ had promised that the powers of evil would be ineffectual for its destruction ‘*the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*’ But after the Church became scattered throughout the world, there being no one recognised episcopal see or central government to appeal to, the voices of the separate individual communities had to be collected together to constitute ‘the majestic evidence’ of the universal voice of the Church Catholic, to which the Holy Spirit had been vouchsafed to ‘guide’ it ‘into all truth.’”

In this short paragraph the Dean has assumed a great deal which cannot be conceded. The texts quoted have little or no bearing on the question. It is, however, true that from the time



of Origen the passage in Matt. xvi. 18 has been generally explained to contain a promise that "the powers of evil will never prevail in the professing Church of Christ." The phrase, however, used in the Greek original, *i.e.* "gates of hell" or of Hades, is never once employed in such a signification in the whole range of Biblical literature, inclusive even of the books of the Old Testament Apocrypha. That phrase means simply "the gates of the invisible world," and means nothing more. Our Lord came to destroy death, and to open to mankind the gates of everlasting life. In the words addressed to Simon Peter, Christ declared to the infant Church that He would fully accomplish the work which He had come into the world to perform. He would rescue it from the power of death, and as the "Second Adam, the Lord from Heaven," not only overcome death in His own person, but rescue from sin and death all those that would believe on His name. Christ's promise will not be fully accomplished until the day when all the members of His blood-washed Church shall be raised in the glory of their Lord, and "death

Origen's  
explanation  
of  
Matt. xvi.  
18.

shall be swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. xv. 54, 55).

The  
phrase  
"gates of  
Hades."

It is useless, therefore, to cite passages from the later Fathers in support of the exegesis referred to, because those writers, without any investigation of their own, adopted the interpretation of Origen. What is required to support Origen's view is to produce passages in Old or New Testament Scripture, or in the Greek writings of earlier date than Origen. If the phrase "gates of Hades" were found only in Matt. xvi. 18, and in no other passage, there might be some show of reason in adducing passages from writers of the fourth and later centuries in support of Origen's interpretation. But the phrase is found in several other passages; and in all of them "the gates of Hades" (or the "Unseen"), mean "the gates of death" or "the grave."<sup>1</sup>

Gates of  
death.

<sup>1</sup> The phrase "the gates of death" occurs several times in the Old Testament, as for instance in Ps. ix. 13, where it is contrasted with "the gates of the daughter of Zion" mentioned in the verse following, in Ps. cvii. (LXX., cvi.) 18, and in Job xxxviii. 17 (first clause). Job is fond of similar expressions, for he speaks of "the gates of my mother's womb" (Chap. iii. 10), and "the gates (or *doors*) of the face" of leviathan fortified with teeth (Chap. xli. 14; in the Hebrew and LXX. Chap. xli. 6). In Job xxxviii. it is asked in the second clause: "hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" The LXX. there render: "Did the door-keepers of Hades (*πυλῶροι δε ᾗδου*) quake when they

Even Origen, who in his commentary on St. Matthew helped to put the Church Fathers upon the wrong track, did not dispute that "the gates of the grave" is the proper signification of the phrase. He interpreted, however, that phrase

Origen's  
figurative  
interpretation.

saw thee?" A similar expression occurs in the Testament of Job (xx. 16), *οἱ δὲ θυρωροὶ τῆς σκοτεινίας*, where those door-keepers are spoken of as giving Elihu, who in that apocryphon (see p. 85 ff.) is regarded as an evil man, "their glory and beauty to share," and "the honour of his form is in Hades" (*ἐν τῷ Ἄιδῃ*). Consequently that book regarded the gates of Hades as gates that open to admit man into his place of doom.

The Book of the Secrets of Enoch (Chap. xlii. 1) speaks of "those who keep the keys, and are the guardians of the gates of hell," and in the comparatively late Christian apocryphon entitled "The History of Joseph the Carpenter," Chap. xliii., Joseph in his prayer is represented as saying: "Let not the door-keepers hinder my soul from entering Paradise."

The exact expression used in Matt. xvi. 18, "gates of Hades," is employed in Isa. xxxviii. 10 in the LXX. version as a translation of the Hebrew "gates of Sheol," where the grave and nothing else is signified. So also in Wisdom xvi. 13, in a phrase partially borrowed from the Song of Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 6), it is said of God: "For thou hast authority over life and death, and thou leadest down to the gates of Hades, and leadest up again." (Compare Tobit xliii. 2.) Further, in 3 Macc. v. 51, it is said of the Jews who were confined in the amphitheatre, and were each moment expecting to be trodden down under the feet of the elephants, that "they cried with exceeding loud voice to Him who was the Master of all power to pity them, seeing they were brought nigh to the gates of Hades." Furthermore in the Psalter of Solomon (see p. 72 ff.) xvi. 2 we read: "When I was far from God, within a little had my soul been poured out unto death. I had been near unto the gates of Hades with the sinner." Compare Ps. lxxxviii. 3, Sirach li. 6.

These texts, and they are all which we have been able to discover in Biblical or apocryphal literature, prove incontestably that "the gates of Hades" mean "the gates of the Unseen world," and not the powers of darkness.

Origen's  
exposition  
led to  
"carnal  
security."

figuratively, and maintained that every false doctrine was a gate of Hades, fornication one gate, denial of God another gate, and so on. His figurative exposition, forasmuch as it was in accordance with the drift of orthodox opinion in that day, which desired to uphold the authority of the Church against the heretics, became rapidly popular, and was in later days asserted by Jerome and others to be the correct interpretation of the phrase. It is curious that Origen, who maintained that the words of our Lord addressed to Peter are applicable to "every disciple of Christ who drank of the spiritual rock that followed them," should have been the means of perverting the true exposition of the passage, and leading the Church astray by "carnal security."

True inter-  
pretation  
lingered  
awhile.

The correct interpretation of the phrase lingered on here and there. In some Fragments of ancient Homilies in Palestinian Syriac transcribed by Mrs. Bensly from a MS. in the Library of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai, and translated by G. H. Gwilliam and F. Crawford Burkitt, published in "Anecdota Oxoniensia" Semitic Series, vol. i. part ix. we read:—

"The Lord said to him, 'Thou art Simon,

which is interpreted Petros'; He said not unto him, 'upon thee I build the Church,' but He said, 'upon this rock (the which is the body wherewith the Lord was clothed) I build my Church; and the gates of Sheol shall not have lordship over it. . . . It is our Lord Jesus the Messiah, who goeth down amongst the dead, and hath lordship over death, and cutteth the bands of Sheol, and breaketh the bars of iron, and leadeth captive captivity, and goeth up in glory," pp. 85, 86, 87.

Traces  
of more  
correct  
view.

The interpretation of Origen was generally adopted in that day, because it coincided with the disposition evinced by all parties, then "within the limits of the Catholic Church," to unduly magnify the privileges and authority of the Church. The danger of such exaggeration had not then been exhibited. Every student of the Fathers is aware of the fact that many texts of Scripture constantly quoted by the Fathers, even in "controversies of faith," have long since been abandoned as proof-texts, even by critics who adhere firmly to the doctrines of which such texts were erroneously adduced as convincing proofs. A tolerably-sized volume

Interpreta-  
tions of the  
Fathers.

might be written on texts of Scripture misinterpreted by the Church Fathers.

John xvi.  
13.

The second passage referred to by the Dean of Lichfield in support of his hypothesis is John xvi. 13. In that case also the Dean has endorsed a misrepresentation. The Revised Version correctly translates the text, "He (the Spirit) shall guide you into all faith." The promises set forth in that great discourse of our Blessed Lord (John xiv.-xvi.), and in the prayer which follows it (John xvii.), did not belong exclusively to the Apostles as individuals, though designed also for their comfort. Such an interpretation would be inconsistent with the general tenor of John xiv. 1-3, and with the majority of the promises set forth in that wonderful closing discourse of our Blessed Lord.

1 John ii.  
27.

The Dean seems unmindful of the fact that 1 John ii. 27, in the expressions there used, is far stronger, and yet that passage unquestionably applies to all true believers. That text cannot be interpreted of "the universal voice of the Church Catholic." The professing Church of Christ on earth, in its ideal character, and when true to its functions, is the pillar which supports "the truth

as it is in Jesus," and the pedestal on which that truth should be raised on high, so as to be seen of all men (1 Tim. iii. 15). "Ye are," says Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, "the light of the world; a city set on a hill cannot be hid" (Matt. v. 13). The Church visible contains the light which is intended to radiate forth into the darkness around. But notwithstanding its lofty ideal, the professing Church of Christ has practically proved a poor pedestal and stay of the faith. Even "the seven candlesticks," among which the Son of Man was once beheld in vision as walking, holding in His right hand "the seven stars," have one by one been removed out of their place, because they departed from the faith, and from the love of Christ (Rev. i.-iii.).

"Pillar  
of the  
truth."

The voice of the Church visible, or Catholic, as it may be termed, is no doubt of importance from an evidential point of view. Nor is it unimportant even in matters of dogma, when its utterances are clear and distinct. But in face of the exhortation of St. Jude (Jude 3), which summarises the teaching on that point of many passages of the New Testament, it is

Voice of  
Churchim-  
portant as  
matter of  
evidence.

necessary in all cases to insist upon an appeal being made to the faith held by the only true and primitive Church, namely, that spoken of in the New Testament writings. The duty is incumbent upon every individual believer to "prove all things, to hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. v. 21). The faithful must not be unmindful of the prophecies of Christ and His Apostles, or of the prophets of the Christian Church. Those prophecies distinctly bore witness to the solemn declaration that teachings and practices were to spring up within "the Church Catholic" which would be opposed to "sound doctrine."

"Com-  
munion of  
Saints."

It has become a common practice for persons who advocate prayers for the dead to appeal in favour of their views to the clause in the Apostle's Creed which speaks of faith in "the communion of saints,"<sup>1</sup> inasmuch as that Creed may be fairly adduced as a witness of the faith of the Catholic Church.

No refer-  
ence to the  
dead.

It should, however, be borne in mind that it cannot be proved that the article in the Creed has any reference whatever to the spirits who

<sup>1</sup> ἡ κοινωνία ἁγίων.



have departed this life.<sup>1</sup> For although that Creed has been repeated for centuries in the Christian Church, there is in existence no authoritative interpretation of several of its clauses. Theologians and worshippers have either put their own interpretation upon the clause now in question, or have expressed their belief in the clause without taking care to understanding precisely what is thereby signified. This is a curious fact, but it is a fact, however unpalatable it may be to the disciples of a particular school.<sup>2</sup>

Dean Luckock admits that the clause in question is not to be found in "the original form of the Creed," or, "in fact, in any of those forms which were extant before the middle of the fifth century." New "articles were added to that Creed even in the fourth and fifth centuries,"

Not in first forms of the Creed.

<sup>1</sup> Yet that assumption lies at the bottom of the arguments made use of in such works as Rev. Arthur Chambers' booklet, "Ought we to Pray for the Departed?" (London: C. Taylor, Warwick Lane, 1895); Canon Saunderson's "The Life of the Waiting Soul in the Intermediate State" (London: Gardner, Darton & Co., 1896), &c. They all assume, also, without an attempt at proof, that 1 Peter iii. 18-20 refers to the subject.

<sup>2</sup> One would suppose that Bishop Pearson's great "Exposition of the Creed" would have been studied, with its notes, ere our present clergy would have ventured to speak and teach so dogmatically on this matter. But, like many other excellent works of a bygone age, that book has been put out of sight as unworthy of investigation, and so error "marches on."

while it did not attain its present developed form until the sixth or seventh centuries.<sup>1</sup>

When inserted its meaning was not explained.

These facts ought to be remembered when that article of the Creed is adduced as a "test of Catholicity." Creeds are less flexible and less easily modified than liturgical forms of prayer. Both creeds and liturgies are now being brought forward in support of the practice of prayers for the dead. But the intrinsic worthlessness of such evidence is seldom touched on; and, when alluded to, is noticed in such a manner as to make the admission of the weakness of the evidence adduced scarcely perceptible by the ordinary reader. Liturgies were for ages in a constant state of flux, being added to or subtracted from, according to circumstances. The article on "the communion of saints" did not generally form part of the Creed; and, when it obtained admittance into the Creed, there is no evidence whatever to show in what sense the article was understood.

<sup>1</sup> See "Luckock," p. 13, and notes at bottom of the page. And yet most of the arguments used by a particular class of writers (in order to gain popularity for "private" opinions ("based on no warranty of Scripture")) are founded on this article of the Creed, the meaning of which they assume to be clear and evident. They then argue upon that assumption, as if their tenets were true beyond all contradiction. See, for instance, the books mentioned in former note, which are only specimens of a number of others that might equally well be cited.

Dean Luckock admits that its signification was left "vague and indefinite." But, having formally made that admission, the Dean asserts that its signification was generally understood; and goes so far as to state that it gave utterance to a thought deeply seated in the minds of most men of that and of the succeeding ages.

"Vague and indefinite."

Such statements made without evidence to support them must be strongly condemned. It is absolutely unknown under what circumstances the article in the Creed was first drafted, and equally unknown what interpretation the "Catholic Church" put upon its phraseology. Every student of the Creed knows that it has been, and is, interpreted in a great variety of ways. The reader has only to turn to Bishop Pearson's classical work on the Creed to see a synopsis of a variety of modes of interpretations of the phrase.

Not defined by the "Catholic Church."

That Bishop explains the article in a most unobjectionable manner. But it has been interpreted by less evangelical theologians as teaching that the saints in heaven intercede for those on earth, and by others that there is some "vague and indefinite" intercommunication between the saints on earth and those souls who are under-

Bishop Pearson.

going a process of purification in another state, whereby those on earth (though for the most part necessarily far inferior in holiness) can assist their friends who have passed on to the other side!!

“After-thoughts.”

Professor Theodore Zahn.

All such theories are “after-thoughts” of a comparatively modern age. We have no intention of going into that subject, and of writing a history of the interpretation of the article. Professor Theodore Zahn, no mean authority on such points, who has expended much research on the matter, has lately written an article in *The Expositor*, in which he cites many reasons to show that the Latin phrase in the Creed (and Latin is the oldest form in which we as yet possess that Creed), namely, *sanctorum communionem*, not improbably referred to the participation of “holy things,” or sacraments, rather than the communion or intercourse of “holy beings.”<sup>1</sup>

We are not fully prepared to endorse this

<sup>1</sup> In *Expositor* for 1898 (August). It is noteworthy that the more uncertain a matter intrinsically is, the more positive dogmatists seem disposed to be in their assertion that there can be no doubt whatever on the subject. Thus the late Dr. Littledale, no mean scholar, had the hardiness to insist on this point in his leaflet on “Prayers for the Dead”: “When we say in the Creed ‘I believe in the communion of saints,’ we pledge ourselves, if we mean what we say, to prayer for the dead. For communion means fellowship, partnership between us and those gone before in the faith. What partnership is that wherein the members of the firm have no interest in one another’s welfare, and do

latest interpretation as necessarily the correct one. But surely it may be urged that when an article of a Creed is so doubtful and obscure, it cannot be employed to establish any disputed doctrine or practice. It is too bad to assume that it was put into the Creed "for the comfort and encouragement of the faithful," when we do not know in what sense "the faithful" understood the expression, and to affirm that "it was lodged in "the heart of men," and built up on a groundwork which was laid in Scripture, when the very article itself is admitted to be "vague and indefinite." All such writing is simply "romancing," and such arguments are unworthy of theologians who ought certainly to understand distinctly what they say, and whereof they confidently affirm (1 Tim. i. 7).

All that kind of argument is, therefore, nothing less than "a begging of the question" of the most aggravated type.

Begging of  
the ques-  
tion.

nothing to promote each other's advantage? If the departed do not pray for us, and we do not pray for them, there is no interchange of good offices, and therefore no communion between us at all."

The writer, however, of the Epistle to the Hebrews was evidently of a somewhat different opinion. For in chapter xii. 22-24 he does not speak of either the saints above or the saints below as praying for one another. But in and through Christ they are in communion with one another as being members of one family. Compare Eph. iii. 14, 15.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

THE Church of England has distinctly condemned  
“the Romish doctrine concerning purgatory”  
The XXII. Article. in her XXII. Article, but it has been repeatedly  
asserted that she has not so distinctly condemned  
“prayers for the dead.”

There is no doubt whatever that a clear distinction must be made between praying for the dead and a belief in purgatory. It has already been pointed out, although we have not minutely discussed the subject, that in the end of the second century strange views began to be held concerning the cleansing quality of the fire which was to be revealed at the appearance of the Lord Jesus with His holy angels, at the Second Advent to judge the world. Through that fire the saints were supposed to have to pass, when caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. iv. 17). How those speculations in process of time became

Speculations as to the fire in the Day of the Lord.

exaggerated, and led to the idea of a purgatory, speculatively put forth by Augustine and others, need not here be discussed. The opinions of Augustine, even though they do not go so far as to teach the doctrine in the developed form in which it was taught by the Council of Florence in A.D. 1438, are by no means authoritative, and must be tested by Scripture, like those of any other theologian.

It may be, perhaps, well to notice (not only as already done, the silence of the Apostolic Fathers on the question) that the argument of Ignatius in chap. v. of the Epistle to the Magnesians is opposed to such an idea. That chapter is thus summarised in the note of Bishop Lightfoot in his great edition of the Apostolic Fathers:—

“All things come to an end. The great alternative of life and death awaits every man at last; and each goes to his own place. There are, as it were, two coinages of mankind: the unbelievers, who have issued from the mint of this world, and the believers, who are stamped with the image of God in Christ. We must first die to Christ's death, if we would rise with His life.”

Ignatius  
on things  
after death.

No hint whatever is here given of any improvement or re-minting of the coinage in the life to come.

U

Cyprian (martyred A.D. 258), in his Address to Demetrianus, the pro-consul of Africa, speaks of the day of judgment in § 24. He alludes to the state into which man is ushered by death in the following section :—

Cyprian on  
the life  
after death.

“We do not envy your comforts, nor do we conceal the Divine benefits. We repay kindness for your hatred ; and for the torments and penalties which are inflicted on us, we point out to you the way of salvation. Believe and live, and do ye who persecute us in time rejoice with us for eternity. When you have once departed thither, there is no longer any place for repentance, and no possibility of making satisfaction. Here life is either lost or saved ; here eternal safety is provided for by the worship of God and the fruits of faith. Nor let any be restrained either by his sins or by his years from coming to obtain salvation. To him who still remains in this world no repentance is too late. The approach to God’s mercy is open, and the access is easy to those who seek and apprehend the truth. Do you entreat for your sins, although it be in the very end of life, and at the setting of the sun of time ; and implore God, who is the one and true God, in confession and faith of acknowledgment of Him, and pardon is granted to the man who confesses, and saving mercy is given from the Divine goodness to the believer, and a passage is opened to immortality even in death itself. This grace Christ bestows ; this gift of His mercy He confers upon us, by overcoming death in the trophy of the cross, by redeeming the believer with the price of His blood, by reconciling man to God the Father, by quickening our mortal nature with a heavenly regeneration. If it be possible, let us all follow Him ; let us be registered in His sacrament and sign. He opens to us the way of life ; He brings us back



to Paradise ; He leads us on to the kingdom of heaven. Made by Him the children of God, with Him we shall ever live ; with Him we shall always rejoice, restored by His own blood. We Christians shall be glorious together with Christ, blessed of God the Father, always rejoicing with perpetual pleasures in the sight of God, and ever giving thanks to God. For none can be other than always glad and grateful, who, having been once subject to death, has been made secure in the possession of immortality.”<sup>1</sup>

The practice of prayers for the dead can be traced back to the third century, consequently long prior to the formulation of the dogma of purgatory. Epiphanius, Cyril, and others of the later Fathers, more or less distinctly approved of that practice ; and as the practice was prior to “the Romish doctrine of purgatory,” which is not taught in the Greek Church, although that Church prays for the dead (see p. 232), it was perfectly right for Bishop Jeremy Taylor, in arguing against the Romish dogma, and for Archbishop Ussher also, to call special attention to the earlier teachings on the subject, and to point out the marked difference between those teachings and the more modern Romish doctrine and practice.

Prayers for the dead apart from a belief in purgatory.

<sup>1</sup> We have availed ourselves of the translation in the writings of Cyprian, vol. i. p. 442, in the Ante-Nicene Library.

Prayers for  
the dead  
omitted in  
Second  
Prayer  
Book.

The early Reformers in England did not in the outset oppose all prayers for the dead. Such prayers are to be found in the Primer of Henry VIII., and in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. But they were completely omitted from the Second Prayer Book, and have never been reinstated in any authorised formulary of the Church.

Prayers  
for the  
dead advo-  
cated by  
Caroline  
divines.

It must be admitted that some writers of the Church of England, especially in the days of Charles I. and Charles II., advocated the use of such prayers. For there was a marked tendency exhibited in that day to build again the things that were destroyed, and thus to make themselves transgressors (Gal. ii. 18). We need not then marvel if, in the degenerate days of Charles II., we find in the Latin inscription on the tomb erected in 1680 over Isaac Barrow, Bishop of St. Asaph, a prayer for that theologian.

The question of the legality of prayers for the dead, placed upon the tombstone of a Roman Catholic, was brought before the Court of Arches and decided by Sir H. Jenner, Dean of Arches, in that court in 1838. The case is known as that of *Brecks v. Woolfrey*. The Rev. J. Brecks,

Vicar of Carisbroke, in the Isle of Wight, brought in articles against Mrs. Woolfrey, a Roman Catholic lady, who erected a tombstone over her husband's grave with the inscription "*Spes mea Christus*"—"Pray for the soul of J. Woolfrey," and with the text, "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead" (2 Macc. xii. 46). The Vicar argued that the stone with the objectionable inscription was contrary to the XXII. Article and the doctrine of the Church of England.

Breeks v.  
Woolfrey.

The Dean of Arches, in giving judgment, drew a distinction between "the Romish doctrine concerning purgatory" and "prayers for the dead," and in his judgment laid considerable stress on the Act of Uniformity, 5 & 6 Edward VI. c. 1, which Act of Uniformity in enacting the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. spoke of the First Prayer Book as "a very godly order set forth by the authority of Parliament for common prayer and administration of the sacraments, to be used in the mother tongue within the Church of England, agreeably to the Word of God and the Primitive Church." And forasmuch as that Act, as could not reasonably otherwise

Judgment  
of Dean of  
Arches.

be expected, used such language, the judge considered the removal of all prayers for the dead from the Second Prayer Book was not a proof that "the practice of praying for the dead had been *expressly prohibited*," and decided that therefore "the facts would not subject the party to ecclesiastical censure, as far as regards the illegality of the inscription on the tombstone."

The judge maintained that—

"The authorities seem to go no further than this—to show that the Church discouraged prayers for the dead, but did not prohibit them; and that the XXII. Article is not violated by the use of such prayers."

In the summary given of that judgment in the Appendix (p. 354–360) to the "Judgments of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in cases of Doctrine and Discipline" (edited under the direction of the Lord Bishop of London by the Hon. G. C. Brodrick and Rev. W. H. Freemantle, London, 1865), it is further stated that—

Disapproval but not prohibition.

"The learned judge then quoted Mr. Palmer's *Origines Liturgicae* as giving the probable reason for the disapproval of the practice of prayers for the dead, namely, 'that they might be abused to the prejudice of the uneducated classes, and to the support of the Roman Catholic doctrine.' The judge further stated that 'the Homilies contained the same disapproval of the practice, but no positive prohibition.'"

It should be noticed that the decision was not appealed against; and hence the case did not come under the review of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which is the final court of appeal in the Church of England.

It is well known that the judge, Sir H. Jenner, held strong High Church views, and that Mr. Palmer, whose opinion was held to be satisfactory in this case, was one of the Oxford Tractarians.

High-  
Church  
views of  
the Judge.

In matters brought before our Courts of Law the judges are moreover generally regarded as bound to take the most favourable view possible, and not to condemn the accused, if any case whatever can be made out on their side. The theologian must, however, look on such points from a somewhat different standpoint.

Lawyers  
and theo-  
logians.

No condemnation of prayers for the dead can fairly be extracted out of the terms used in the XXII. Article. But the XXXV. Article endorses in a general way the teaching of "the Homilies appointed to be read in churches in the time of Queen Elizabeth of famous memory." It was in Queen Elizabeth's time that the XLII. Articles, agreed to in Edward VI.'s reign (1552) were reduced to XXXIX. (1562). Now Article XXXV.

of Elizabeth's reign endorsed again the opinion of the Homilies issued in the former reign as containing "godly and wholesome doctrine," and applied that statement also to the second book of Homilies mentioned in the revised Articles.

The teaching of Church of England.

The Church of England refers to those Homilies as setting forth her doctrines in fuller and more popular language. Thus in Article XI. reference is made for a fuller statement of the doctrine of justification by faith only to the Homily of Justification.

Importance of the Homilies.

Consequently, when the Homilies contain not casual expressions but full and well-argued statements, the doctrines set forth in those Homilies are to be regarded as expressing the teachings of the Church of England.

The Homily or Sermon concerning Prayer, says :—

Homily on Prayer opposes the practice.

"Now to intreat of that question, whether we ought to pray for them that are departed out of this world or no. Wherein, if we will cleave only unto the Word of God, then we must needs grant that we have no commandment so to do. For the Scripture doth acknowledge but two places after this life, the one proper to the elect and blessed of God, the other to the reprobate and damned souls; as may well be gathered by the parable of Lazarus and the rich man. Which place St. Augustine [Lib. ii., *Evang. Quæst.*, cap. 38] expounding, saith in this wise :

‘That which Abraham speaketh unto the rich man in Luke’s Gospel, namely that the just cannot go into those places where the wicked are tormented, what other things doth it signify but only this, that the just, by reason of God’s judgment, which may not be revoked, can show no deed of mercy in helping them which after this life are cast into prison, *until they pay the uttermost farthing?*’ These words, as they confound the opinion of helping the dead by prayer, so they do clean confute and take away the vain error of purgatory, &c.”

After commenting further on that passage, and on Eccl. xi. 3, which, although it contains no reference to the state of the dead, is repeatedly quoted by the Fathers in that sense, and on John iii. 36, together with Augustine Lib. v., *Hypognost.*, Chrysostom, in *Heb. ii.*, *Hom. iv.*, Cyprian, *contra Demetrianum*, the Homily proceeds:—

“Let these and such other places be sufficient to take away the gross error of purgatory out of our heads; neither let us dream any more that the souls of the dead are anything at all holpen by our prayers; but as the Scripture teacheth us, let us think that the soul of man, passing out of the body, goeth straightways either to heaven or else to hell, whereof the one needeth no prayer, and the other is without redemption.”<sup>1</sup>

Purgatory  
and  
prayers for  
the dead  
alike con-  
demned.

<sup>1</sup> It has been affirmed by recent writers that this teaching that souls who depart this life go either to heaven or to hell is a serious theological error. The popular language used in the Homily was, of course, adopted as a protest against the Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, popularly designated “the third place.” That accommodation, however, to popular modes of expression was not intended to deny the Scriptural teaching that the place occupied now by the blessed dead is not the final resting-place referred to by our Lord in His description of

"The only purgatory wherein we must trust to be saved is the death and blood of Christ; which, if we apprehend with a true and steadfast faith, it purgeth and cleanseth us from all our sins. . . . If this kind of purgation will not serve them, let them never hope to be released by other men's prayers. . . ." And the next paragraph commences with, "Let us not, therefore, dream *either* of purgatory *or* of prayer for the souls of them that be dead."

Not a mere  
*obiter dic-*  
*tum.*

Thus distinctly does the English Church in her Homilies, authorised by Article XXXV. as expositions of her doctrines, reject not only purgatory, but also prayers for the dead. We have to deal here not with some casual *obiter dictum*, nor with a chance exposition of a particular text, but with a formal statement of doctrine,

the Judgment in Matt. xxv. 34, as "the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," nor the "new heavens and the new earth" depicted in the visions of Rev. xxi. and xxii.

The popular Protestant phraseology may, however, be defended as substantially correct by reference to 2 Cor. xii. 2. St. Paul there speaks of "*the third heaven*" which is perhaps identical with "*Paradise*" (2 Cor. xii. 4). The object gained in speaking of the place of the blessed dead as "heaven" is to emphasize the doctrine taught in Pre-Christian times (in Wisdom iii. 1) that "the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them"; or, taught earlier still, in Isa. lvii. 2, "he entereth into peace," that is the righteous, "who are taken away from the evil to come." This is set forth more plainly in the Apostle's words, "absent from the body and present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8, 9), inasmuch as "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1). Consequently, the blessed dead need no prayers to be offered up for their repose by those who are still in the ranks of "the Church militant here on earth."



showing what the Church intended to be understood by the references to Romish prayers on behalf of the dead in Article XXII. and to masses for the dead denounced in Article XXXI.

Archbishop Cranmer, as is well known, had the chief hand in drawing up the XLII. Articles which formed the basis of the XXXIX. Articles which were finally adopted. There is no distinct statement on the subject in Cranmer's writings. But the teaching of Becon (chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer) is identical with the above. (See Becon's remarks on the "Articles of the Christian Religion," in his "Prayers," &c., published by the Parker Society, p. 461; and in his "Catechism," &c., p. 394.) Similar is the teaching of Bishop Jewel in the second portion of his "Works," p. 743. (Parker Society's edition.) Those theologians took part in the drawing up of the Church's formularies; and Jewel's "Apology of the Church of England" is acknowledged by Canon XXX. (which Canon is referred to in the last Rubric of the Order for Public Baptism of Infants), to be an authoritative statement of the Church's teaching.

The  
opinion of  
English  
Reformers.

Such references could be indefinitely multiplied. It is absurd for some to maintain that

Prayer for  
Church  
militant.

the prayer for the Church militant: "We also bless Thy Holy Name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear; beseeching Thee to *give us grace so to follow* their good examples, *that with them we* may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom," includes prayer for the departed dead. The very idea of prayer for the dead is excluded by the words used in the beginning of that prayer, "Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church *militant here on earth.*" The case must be a bad one which seeks to distort simple phrases in such a manner. "The Bidding Prayer of the Canons of 1603" and the form used "in the commemoration of Benefactors of the Universities," are equally free from any imputation of praying for the dead. Prayers for the dead can be as easily extracted from the phraseology of the Lord's Prayer; and some have even ventured to go as far as to make the assertion that such prayers are countenanced by the Lord's Prayer. There is, however, a limit at which arguments of that kind may be best left to their own self-refutation.

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